

Iran rebels say Tehran planning attack

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Iranian resistance group, Mujahideen-e-Khalq, on Sunday warned of an imminent attack by the Iranian regime on the Mujahideen's bases in Iraq. A Mujahideen statement said Iran was preparing for a "large-scale offensive" on Iraq on several fronts. It said the attack will target the bases of the Iranian resistance and parts of Iraqi territory. The statement said that large contingents of forces affiliated with Pasdaran (the Revolutionary Guards Corps) were amassed along the Iran-Iraq frontier in the Qasr Eshar region. "The operation's objective is to attack the bases of the Iranian resistance and to occupy parts of Iraqi territory," the statement said. The statement, issued by the office of the Mujahideen in Baghdad, called on the United Nations Security Council to take effective measures against what it termed as "terrorist dictatorships" pointing to the Iranian regime's "recurrent violations of international law."

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published by the Jordan Press Foundation

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Muasher trip to Tel Aviv 'unofficial'

AMMAN (J.T.) — The trip that Ambassador-designate to Israel Marwan Muasher made to Tel Aviv on Sunday is an "unofficial" visit whose purpose was to check the affairs of the embassy there and to look for a residence for the ambassador, an official source said. The source said Mr. Muasher, who is expected back in Amman on Tuesday, will not assume his work in Tel Aviv before the first week of April. Jordan and Israel opened embassies in their respective capitals on Dec. 11 but that the exchange of ambassadors was delayed because of Israel's failure to name its ambassador to Amman. Differences between Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and Foreign Minister Shimon Peres are reportedly responsible for Tel Aviv's delay in naming an ambassador to Jordan. Shimon Shamir, former ambassador to Egypt, is expected to be appointed as the Jewish state's envoy to Jordan and he is expected in the Kingdom early next month.

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Senate move expected today for full Jordan debt write-off

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Two key members of the U.S. Senate are today expected to present a bill to the Senate under which Washington could write off \$488 million of Jordan's official debts, Foreign Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti said Sunday.

The move, by Senator Mitch McConnell (Republican-Kentucky) and Senator Patrick Leahy (Democrat-Vermont), comes after a House of Representatives subcommittee slashed to \$50 million an administration request for an outlay of \$275 million to write off the Jordanian debts.

In technical terms, a \$275 million outlay would enable the administration to write off up to \$488 million; the \$50 million approved by the House subcommittee would allow a write-off upto \$100 million.

The slashing of the amount by the House sub-committee drew severe criticism from Jordanian officials and Parliament members.

Mr. Kabariti told the Jor-

dan Times on Sunday that the new measure would appropriate the full \$275 million now, "but will actually obligate \$50 million for fiscal 1995, with the remaining \$225 million to be spent in fiscal 1996."

The foreign minister said the move was agreed upon

among U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher, Mr. McConnell, who chairs the Senate Appropriations Committee, and Mr. Leahy, the ranking Democrat in the Senate, Thursday while the secretary of state was in Israel.

It was believed that Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin briefed His Majesty King Hussein on the move when he paid a previously unannounced visit to Aqaba late Thursday after a meeting with Mr. Christopher in Tel Aviv.

Mr. Kabariti said the mea-

sures would be presented in the form of addition to a Department of Defence supplemental bill now before Senate.

"If the McConnell-Leahy amendment is adopted by the full 100-member Senate with-

out changes, and if the full supplemental spending bill is passed by the Senate on Thursday, the next step would be for the House and Senate to go into a conference session in approximately two weeks' time," the foreign minister said.

"Conference" sessions bring together key appropriations from the House and Senate to reconcile their respective versions of various bills, in this case the Department of Defence supplemental spending bill.

In technical terms, the House version of the Department of Defence supplemental spending bill makes no reference to debt relief for Jordan. As such, the Senate version, if it includes the McConnell-Leahy amendment, will have to be reconciled with the House version.

Members of the House of Representatives of Senate meeting in the conference "will also have to agree the level at which Congress will fund the administration's request for debt relief for Jordan," said the foreign minister.

(Continued on page 3)

stipulated in the peace treaty.

The plans, which include the building of dams and a desalination plant, are expected to cost up to \$400 million. The proposed facilities and detailed seasonal arrangements governing the Jordan and Yarmouk rivers would make available to Jordan an additional quantity of 215 million cubic metres of water every year. At present, the Kingdom is getting around 110 million cubic metres to 120 million cubic metres a year.

Israeli sources, quoted in a report carried by the Jerusalem Post on Sunday, said Prince Hassan and Mr. Peres were to discuss a joint proposal for dam construction that they will present to Germany in a meeting in Bonn this week.

Sources in Amman confirmed that the Crown Prince and Mr. Peres were to meet with Chancellor Helmut Kohl in Bonn on Wednesday.

An Israeli embassy spokesman said Jordanian-Israeli

cooperation on water projects and economic issues" were the key topic in the meeting between the Crown Prince and Mr. Peres.

The Jordan News Agency, Petra, said the Crown Prince's talks with Mr. Peres came on the sidelines of a Socialist International delegation's meeting in Amman (see separate story).

It said the Crown Prince and the Israeli foreign minister discussed "prospects for moving from the stage of peace-making to peace-building and ways to meet the needs of the current stage in terms of international cooperation so as to carry out Jordanian development projects that would benefit citizens at achievements of the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty."

The Crown Prince and Mr. Peres discussed Europe's role in implementing the peace treaty and in establishing a just and lasting comprehen-

(Continued on page 3)

Prince Hassan, Peres discuss joint water project proposal

By P.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN (Petra) — Foreign Minister Abdul Karim Al Kabariti on Sunday received Saudi Charge D'Affaires in Amman Mohammad Al Basam and discussed with him issues related to regional economic plans and arrangements to hold an international economic conference in Amman in October. The minister lauded the positive role played by the Saudi Development Fund in supporting development projects in Jordan and expressed hopes that there would be an active Saudi participation in regional programmes, particularly the Amman conference.

Talks with Sahaf

Mr. Kabariti on Sunday also received his Iraqi counterpart Mohammad Al Sahaf and exchanged with him views on issues listed on the agenda of the U.N. Security Council.

Mr. Sahaf briefed Mr. Kabariti on the outcome of visits he paid to Qatar and Oman recently.

Mr. Kabariti stressed the importance of seeking to find ways to alleviate the suffering of the Iraqi people in international and Arab arenas.

Swiss proposal

Mr. Kabariti also received a Swiss government envoy, Henric Reinmann, and discussed with him a Swiss proposal to create a sixth multilateral group in the Middle East peace talks focusing on human rights. Mr. Kabariti stressed Jordan's keenness to protect democracy, freedoms and human rights.

The meeting was attended by Swiss Ambassador in Amman Gian Federico Pedotti.

Egyptian message

The minister also received a message from Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Musa outlining the outcome of the Egyptian-American talks which took place during a visit to Cairo by U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher.

The message was delivered by Egyptian Ambassador in Amman Ibrahim Hamdi.

Canadian message

Mr. Kabariti also received a message from his Canadian counterpart related to Canada's support of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA).

(Continued on page 7)

Sustainable regional footing vital for peace process'

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan on Sunday met at Al Haschemiyah Palace with a delegation representing the Middle East Committee of Socialist International.

In an address to the group, Prince Hassan reviewed developments in the region and the Middle East peace process as well as future challenges facing the region.

Prince Hassan also reviewed the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty which, he said, was a crowning achievement of a series of courageous steps that tackled border, water and security issues as well as other important dimensions of the Arab-Israeli conflict, such as the status of Jerusalem and refugees which need more negotiations between the concerned parties.

Prince Hassan said Jordan was seeking to build a new world and to create better circumstances that will enable all parties involved to enjoy the fruits of peace.

Following are excerpts from the address:

Honoured guests, ladies and gentlemen:

It is truly a pleasure to host the Middle East Committee of the Socialist International here in Amman. We have always valued your interest in

and support for peace in the Middle East, and this will be ever more vital as we move from peace-making to peace-building. I hope you will not object if I say a few words on the subject of this particular

1994 was a turning point in the history of the Middle East. Palestinian and Israeli negotiators progressed from a declaration of principles to the implementation of agreements. The PLO installed itself in Gaza and Jericho, and at last began to take charge of Palestinian affairs of Palestinian soil. Although implementation has had its share of difficulties, it is our hope that mutually acceptable solutions can be found, and that the spirit of accommodation will prevail. For our part, we are pledged to do our utmost to support peace between Palestinians and Israelis.

On the Jordanian-Israeli track, a series of bold moves culminated in the signing of a treaty of peace last October. In addition to formal agreements on borders, water and security, the treaty addressed significant issues of the Arab-Israeli conflict; it referred to the status of Jerusalem and refugees, although these are subject to further negotiations with other parties concerned. The treaty also laid out a number of joint commitments in areas like tour-

(Continued on page 7)

ism, development, energy, archaeology, and academia.

The treaty signals a new determination to pool and distribute our resources in a partnership of equals. We seek to build a new world, to create new conditions, under which all our peoples will enjoy the fruits of peace.

The means to that end must surely be cooperation. One of the treaty's more forward-looking provisions is its commitment to the creation of a conference on security and cooperation in the Middle East (CSCME). This entails the adoption of a regional forum, loosely based on the CSCE model that has developed in Europe from the Helsinki process.

Along with many regional and other countries, Jordan believes that a neutral, low-key forum of this sort might be the best place to address contentious regional issues.

A CSCME could provide a neutral idiom in which to discuss common challenges, and a credible framework for collective action. It could be a focus for non-military solutions; for surely it is plain to all that military solutions are not solutions at all. The recognition of common goals and aspirations, the building of a structure of interconnection and mutual aid; these are the only lasting

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Egyptian president hoping to find new partners in Tokyo

CAIRO (AFP) — President Hosni Mubarak begins a three-day visit to Japan on Monday hoping to strike up a new partnership between the two countries and boost economic ties.

A Foreign Ministry advisor, Nabil Fahmy, described the trip as a "stepping stone" towards better relations on a "partnership basis rather than a donor-recipient basis."

Cairo received \$99 million in Japanese aid grants and technical aid in 1993.

During his visit Mr. Mubarak, who will be accompanied by his wife Suzanne, will meet with political leaders as well as representatives from trade and industry.

The couple, who will stay at the Akasaka Palace, will also meet Emperor Akihito. They will be special guests at a state dinner in the Imperial Palace on Tuesday followed Wednesday by a dinner hosted by Japanese Prime Minister Tomiichi Murayama.

Officials from both countries agree that their economic relations have yet to realize their full potential.

On the agenda are aid projects to be funded by Japan, including a solid waste project in Alexandria and the construction of a bridge spanning the Suez Canal, Nozumu Takao, head of the economic section at Japan's embassy, told AFP.

Egypt has "not yet seen as much Japanese investment as it could," Wabib Al Miniawy, head of the Japanese bureau in the

Ministry of International Cooperation, agreed.

Japanese private investment in Egypt remained unchanged from 1992 to 1993 at \$67 million, according to Japanese embassy figures.

Trade between the two countries rose 25 per cent to \$844.6 million in 1993. Japanese exports to Egypt were seven times the value of Egyptian exports to Japan.

On Saturday Industry Minister Ibrahim Fawzi announced that Egypt had won a contract to export \$1 million worth of trousers to Tokyo, Osama Nassar, has told the Egyptian press.

But some 70,000 Japanese are expected to visit Egypt in 1995, the tourism advisor at the Egyptian embassy in Tokyo, Osama Nassar, has told the Egyptian press.

The increasing number of Japanese tourists has now placed the country second in the Far East market after China which sent 105,410 tourists in 1994, but ahead of Australia and India which had 25,756 and 16,164 tourists respectively.

And they have persuaded Egyptian tourism officials to launch a huge publicity campaign in South East Asia in a bid to attract even more visitors.

The Japanese "spend 15

Bombs found on Arafat route

GAZA CITY (AFP) — Palestinian police discovered two bombs along a road due to be taken by Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat among seven devices discovered Sunday in Gaza.

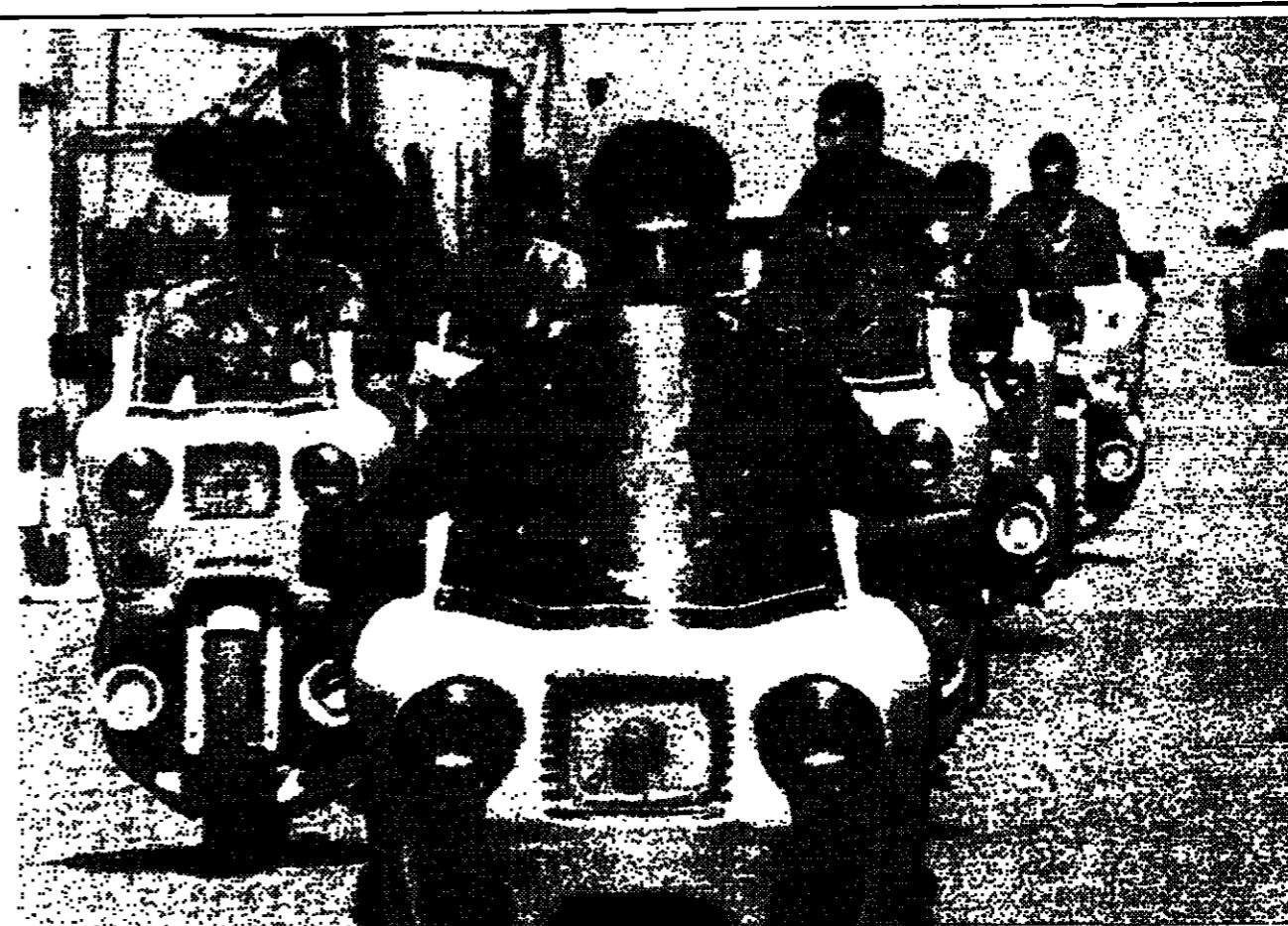
One of devices on Mr. Arafat's route — 40 kilos of explosives — left a crater 20 metres across when Israeli army experts blew it up in a controlled explosion, witness said.

The first four bombs were found along the border with Egypt, and the Israeli army blew them up, military officials said.

Another was planted at the settlement of Morag, and also destroyed.

Then Palestinians found two remote-controlled bombs on a highway near Kfar Darom settlement.

They alerted the Israeli army which sealed off the area, evacuating people living nearby and a secondary school.



Palestinian motor cycle police in the Gaza Strip (AFP photo)

Huge prizes draw oil companies to Iraq

BAGHDAD (R) — The oilmen are back in Baghdad. Executives from international oil firms have eagerly flocked to sanctions-hit Iraq to secure oil supplies for the next century from its huge and untapped fields.

Executives from big firms have visited the Iraqi capital since sanctions were imposed by the United Nations in 1990, blocking exports of about three million barrels per day (bpd).

But an international oil conference which has drawn 250 delegates from 29 countries and several leading Western oil firms was the first of its kind since the Gulf war, and underlined keen interest in Iraq's potential.

Faced with growing world demand over the next 15 years and falling output in existing fields, executives are already negotiating to develop massive Iraqi oil fields and renew term contracts for oil exports.

Iraqi Oil Minister Safa

Hadi Jawad spelled out the prize to delegates, saying Iraq had more than 30 fields open for development with a capacity of some 4.5 million bpd of oil.

These new fields alone are similar to the Norwegian and British sectors of the North Sea and would match the capacity of neighbour Iran.

"As soon as the embargo is lifted we hope to be among the first possible partnerships in the development of (Iraq's) oil reserves," said Christophe de Margerie, executive vice president of French Total.

The United Nations will discuss lifting sanctions on Monday. The United States has been waging a diplomatic campaign to make sure they stay but industry executives are already negotiating to develop massive Iraqi oil fields and renew term contracts for oil exports.

Iraq is at the leading edge of talks with the Iraqi government along with France's ELF Aquitaine and Italy's

Family members, relatives plan ICRC sit-in

4 Jordanian detainees in Kuwait said hospitalised

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — At least four Jordanian prisoners in Kuwait have been hospitalised after their health deteriorated as a result of a hunger-strike, demanding their release, relatives said Sunday.

The four are among dozens of Jordanian detainees tried and convicted of "collaborating" with Iraq during the August 1990-February 1991 Iraqi occupation of Kuwait. The hunger-strike involves 20 of them, the relatives said.

At least six of them were sentenced to death but the sentences were later commuted to life term by the emir, Sheikh Jaber Al Ahmad Al Sabah.

Family members and relatives said they planned to stage a sit-in at the offices of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) on Monday to highlight their cause and demand for the immediate release of their loved ones.

According to the family members and relatives, the prisoners started the hunger-strike in mid-February with the hope that their case would be brought to the attention of Sheikh Jaber and they could be included in a general amnesty the emir usually issues to mark 'Eid Al Fitr.

"When the pardon did come, they found that their names were not on the list and they pressed ahead with the hunger-strike," said the wife of one prisoner.

"One of our contacts in Kuwait who usually visits my

husband in prison informed me this week that four of the hunger-strikers had been hospitalised," the woman told the Jordan Times.

Relatives of two other prisoners, being held at the Doha central prison in Kuwait, confirmed the account. All of them spoke on condition of anonymity for fear of reprisals against the detainees.

Dozens of Jordanians are serving terms in Kuwaiti prisons after they were tried by martial law courts and later a state security court on charges of "collaboration." The main evidence of "collaboration" against them was that they worked for the Iraqi-run Al Nida newspaper.

Prior to the invasion, at least 20 of them were working for the official Kuwaiti News Agency or independent newspapers. The Iraqis ran the media in Kuwait following their invasion of Kuwait and the journalists were asked to report to the ministry of information.

"Most of them did not do any work at the ministry or at the Al Nida newspaper," said the brother of one prisoner. "The newspaper was printed in Baghdad and distributed in Kuwait."

However, "the courts were satisfied with whatever flimsy argument and evidence" the prosecution presented during the trial and found them guilty," said the brother.

No confirmation of the hunger-strike or the hospitalisation of four was available from the ICRC. As a policy, the all-Swiss humanitarian agency, which has visitation rights to prisons in most countries, does not comment

"Consideration of such circumstances is part of all international laws, but no one is talking about them in the context of Kuwait," said the woman bitterly.

Chaos is enough to fear in Egypt

QENA (AP) — With the crack of a starter's pistol, 90 cyclists took off Saturday on a route winding past pharaonic ruins and the fertile farms of the Nile Valley — right through the heart of one of the roughest spots in Egypt's insurgency.

But fear of extremists was the least of the cyclists' worries. They had more to fear from score keeping — or the lack of it.

Harried organisers of Egypt's 28th cycling tournament overlooked how to keep time at the finish line.

The German athletes were so discouraged, they wanted to go home after Saturday's leg of the race, said manager Heinz-Peter Ruffin.

"We did not fear terrorism, but we came to fear the organisation. It's a catastrophe," he said as the cyclists gathered before the nearly 5,000-year-old columns of the Karnak Temple in the tourist town of Luxor.

It turns out the Egyptian Cycling Federation, which organised the 14-day race, said it could not afford to buy the camera that determines the exact time the cyclists cross the finish line.

The camera costs \$20,500, and the federation preferred to pay for hospitality, organisers said. As a result, the top three finishers were re-

corded. As for the rest, organisers could only promise to try to keep track.

No one, including the cyclists, was sure how the federation would determine the top 10.

Cyclists from 13 countries were taking part in the race, which began Thursday in the resort of Aswan. It will follow the Nile then the Red Sea before ending in the port of Alexandria.

In all, the cyclists will bike 1,520 kilometres.

The race itself seemed a sideshow to a new government effort to prove southern Egypt is safe for tourists to again visit the spectacular pharaonic antiquities.

"We want to tell the world that in Egypt a small group of terrorists will not affect the 60 million people of a generous and hospitable nation," said Tareq Al Guindy, secretary-general of the cycling federation.

The race Saturday passed through Qena, a southern town in a region known for frequent battles between police and militants who want to turn Egypt into an Islamic state.

Last August, a 13-year-old Spanish boy was killed when militants fired on a tourist bus in a nearby village. Three years of strife have wrecked southern Egypt's once-

lucrative tourist trade.

Understandably, there was ample security along the race route.

Three pickup trucks, carrying police disguised in the gowns of Egyptian peasants, drove in and out of the procession of cyclists, with more policemen brought up the rear.

The six members of the Algerian team, whose country is wracked by a more violent Islamic rebellion, but not edgy about security, but did not want to talk about it.

"We only fear God," said Oukili Ali, a cyclist from Algiers. "We are sportsmen who came to compete and that's it."

In the end, the route offered little more than a taste of Egyptian country-side.

Cyclists wearing fluorescent leotards and helmets first flashed through the streets of Luxor, then arrived at the wide Luxor-Qena road, flanked on both sides by wheat, sugar cane and tomato fields. Farmers, stooped in the fields, rose to attention as the colourful procession passed.

Little girls wearing head scarves waved and clapped. A cyclist whose chain came off was helped by two boys who rushed to his aid.

Witness says Geagea wanted rival killed

BEIRUT (R) — A man told a Beirut court on Saturday that Christian warlord Samir Geagea's militia offered him \$30,000 to kill Dr. Geagea's political rival Dany Chamoun.

Chamoun, son of late President Camille Chamoun, was gunned down with his family three months later and Mr. Geagea, the first of Lebanon's 1975-90 civil war militia chiefs to stand trial, has been charged with ordering the October 1990 killings.

Dr. Geagea faces a possible death sentence for the Chamoun assassinations and a February 1994 church bombing that killed 11 people, for which he is being tried separately.

Witness Yousef Ghayaini told Lebanon's highest court, the judicial council, that members of Dr. Geagea's Lebanese Forces (LF) militia asked him to kill Chamoun by planting a bomb at a shooting club he frequented to be set off by remote control.

Mr. Ghayaini told the court the LF promised him up to \$30,000 if the operation was successful but he instead informed army intelligence officers of the attempt on Chamoun's life.

HIJAZ RAILWAY TRAIN

Dep. Amman 6:00 every Monday

Arr. Damascus 5:00 p.m. every Monday

Dep. Damascus 7:30 a.m. every Sunday

Arr. Amman 5:00 p.m. every Sunday

MARKET PRICES

Upper/lower price in fils per kg.

Apple 700/500

Banana 680

Banana (Makassar) 620

Cabbage 100/50

Carrot 170/80

Chard 180/100

Cucumbers (large) 90/50

Cucumbers (small) 100/100

Eggplant 140/80

Garlic 100/50

Green beans 240/180

Lemon 350/240

Marrow (large) 90/50

Marrow (small) 140/70

Onion (green) 240/140

Onion (dry) 400/250

Orange 440/320

Pear (soft) 600/400

Pear (sweet) 350/250

Potato 500/300

Radish 140/80

Spinach 120/60

String Beans 650/400

Tomato 180/90

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel: 77311-19

PROGRAMME TWO

17:29 Le Prince Et La Sirene
17:38 Que Le Meilleur Gagne
18:00 Marion NZ
19:00 News in French
19:15 Camer De Notes
19:20 The Bold and the Beautiful
20:28 The Bold and the Beautiful
22:00 South Beach
22:20 News in English
22:30 Scarf and Black

PRAYER TIMES

Fajr
(Sunrise) Dhuhr
Dhuhr
Asr
Magrib
Isha

CHURCHES

Mary of Nazareth Church
Church of God Church, Tel. 810740
Joseph Church Tel. 624590
Church of the Assumption Tel. 7440
St. George Church Tel. 661757
Church of the Assumption Tel. 622565
Church of the Assumption Tel. 5341
St. Mary Church Tel. 630851, Tel. 543.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Min. Max. temp.

Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331

Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 772641

Princess Basma returns from social development summit

AMMAN (Petra) — Her Royal Highness Princess Basma Sunday returned home from Copenhagen after taking part in the U.N. Summit on Social Development which convened in the Danish capital.

In her capacity as a U.N. ambassador for human development affairs and representative of non-governmental organisations, Princess Basma delivered an address at the opening ceremony in which she called for reconsidering concepts on peace and social stability and

security to solve social, economic and environmental problems.

Princess Basma said there can be no social justice while poverty dominates the lives of millions of people.

She voiced hope that the summit would contribute to bringing changes needed for starting a new era which focuses on human values.

Princess Basma also participated in a meeting between ambassadors of the U.N. for human development and the non-

governmental organisations participating in the conference.

In an address at the meeting, Princess Basma urged Arab countries to prepare human development strategies and to make them part of their national development plans.

Princess Basma also met with U.N. Secretary General Boutros Ghali and presented him with the first copy of a United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) book on poverty.

Lawzi calls for unified stand between Arab, African countries

AMMAN (Petra) — Speaker of the Upper House of Parliament Ahmad Lawzi Sunday stressed the need for a unified stand between Arab and African countries to eliminate problems of poverty and unemployment.

Senator Lawzi was speaking to Arab and African parliamentarians who are on a current visit to the country. He said it is of paramount importance to unify the stands of Arab and African countries and to enhance cooperation between them to achieve tangible develop-

ment in all fields. "Individual states do not have influence on their own," Mr. Lawzi said.

This era witnesses the emergence of giant and unified blocs which have a major influence on the international arena.

Mr. Lawzi cited one example where Arab and African countries were able to unify their stand and succeeded.

It was at the time of International Parliamentary Unions (IPU) election's where Arab and African countries voted for Fathi Sour, speak-

Industry ministry, German agency publish 1995 standards catalogue

AMMAN (J.T.) — An important tool for importers, exporters, traders, industrialists and all metrology, standards, testing, quality (MSTQ)-related institutions, the "Jordanian Standards Catalogue 1995" has recently been issued for the first time since the establishment of the Jordanian Directorate of Standards and Metrology (JDS) in 1972.

The catalogue is intended for the use of those concerned with standards and/or their application in industry and trade or consumer protection, as well as for all personnel in the fields of MSTQ management.

In cooperation with the German Agency for Technical Cooperation (GTZ) MSTQ Project, the catalogue was prepared by the Jordanian Directorate of Standards and Metrology (JDS).

A directorate within the Ministry of Trade and Industry, JDS was established by virtue of the Standards and Metrology Law No. 24/1972.

JDS concentrates on the preparation of standards, observation of standards implementation, the control of precious metals and the control of weights and measures (legal metrology).

Through its standards division, the JDS prepares Jordanian standards by forming specialised, technical committees of representatives from the private and public

sectors along with scientific institutions.

While the quality control division monitors the implementation of standards imposed on local and imported products, the precious metals division conducts the necessary tests to ensure that the Kingdom's and imported gold products conform with legal fitness.

In addition, the metrology division controls measurement instruments used in commercial transactions and calibrating those that do not conform. Among instruments controlled are, weights, balances and weighing bridges; stick scales; pressure measures; fuel capacity measures; metres at gas stations and on gas tanks; and taxi metres.

Within the fields of standardisation, metrology, testing, quality, precious metals control and Arab and international cooperation, JDS undertakes the supervision of preparation, revision, and the amendment and replacement of Jordanian standards and monitors their implementation.

Under its metrology programme, JDS is responsible for the establishment and monitoring of the implementation of a national system for metrology.

It adopts all national physical standards that are necessary for the calibration of measuring instruments, as well as unifying and develop-

ing the means and methods of measurement and the calibration and adjustment of measuring instruments.

It is also within the authority of the JDS to accredit laboratories, grant certificates of conformity and quality marks and to conclude agreements with Arab and international organisations regarding mutual recognition of quality marks.

The control of precious metals allows the directorate to test and stamp those that attain the approved fitness.

In addition the JDS has the jurisdiction to cooperate with Arab, regional and international corporations in the field of standardisation and metrology and to represent Jordan at meetings and conferences held by the directorate.

The catalogue, which is available in Arabic and English, may be obtained from the Jordanian Institute for Standards and Metrology (JDS).

A directorate within the Ministry of Trade and Industry, JDS was established by virtue of the Standards and Metrology Law No. 24/1972.

JDS concentrates on the preparation of standards, observation of standards implementation, the control of precious metals and the control of weights and measures (legal metrology).

Through its standards division, the JDS prepares Jordanian standards by forming specialised, technical committees of representatives from the private and public

presence here."

Dr. Zayadin said people should be aware of the serious implications that "imperialist" societies and institutions might have on the Jordanian society.

Some activists continue to think of foreigners as imperialists and tourists as Zionists, and anyone who works with a foreign agency or association is a spy or an agent. Those who do not agree dare not speak out.

At Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation Saturday evening, four speakers from different ideological backgrounds discussed the role of foreign institutions in the Kingdom and their influence on Jordanian society.

But in the comparatively large audience of about 150 attendants no heated debate on the topic took place.

One speaker, Ya'coub Zayadin, secretary general of the Jordanian Communist Party, insisted that the foreign societies and institutions in Jordan and elsewhere in the Arab countries are imperialists who aim at exploiting Arab wealth and resources. He cited the U.S. embassy in Egypt which in the past was staffed with 1,030 employees and allocated \$45 million for research and study purposes.

"I am not an isolationist nor am I against the foreign culture," Dr. Zayadin said. "I am also the founder of Arab-Soviet friendship societies, but there is no comparison between these and the ones who have a huge

"Can we give up Reuters and CNN?" he asked.

Hani Hourani, director of Al Urdun Al Jadid Research Centre, strongly refuted all arguments in support of the conspiracy theory.

Mr. Hammoudah said he believed that poverty and unemployment in the Arab countries are a natural outcome of the West's foreign policies.

"These institutions which seem to defend human rights and democracy, defend repression in any country if it serves their country's interests," said Mr. Hammoudah who last year wrote an article in the weekly magazine Al Ufuq, attacking German organisations operating in Jordan. These include

"How can we condemn these institutions and societies that we know we are in need of?" he said. "We are facing a new fundamentalist wave that combines traditional Marxists and nationalists who pass arbitrary judgments and put obstacles in front of modern thinkers."

"I don't say that all societies are honest and innocent," he added. "But we can't say that every tourist is a disguised Jew and every foreigner is a spy."

Trade minister, investment officials brief visiting American Bar Association team

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Minister of Trade and Industry Ali Abu Ragheb and other officials dealing with investments in Jordan on Sunday briefed a visiting delegation from the American Bar Association (ABA) on the investment climate in the Kingdom and the related laws, regulations and incentives.

During their briefings, the minister and officials of the Amman Financial Market (AFM) as well as representatives of the Amman Chamber of Commerce emphasised Jordan's commitment to liberalising its economy and enacting laws designed to improve the investment climate in the Kingdom through easing all regulations and extending facilities and incentives to businesses.

Emad Timawi, chairman of the delegation's programme

in the Middle East, said the visitors were impressed by the "lot of work" that has gone into transforming the Kingdom's economy in the last four or five years.

"The net message that they gave us was that there is a leadership in this country that is committed to economic liberalisation and there is a dedicated and qualified work-force in the country to implement the policy of liberalisation," Mr. Timawi, special counsel to the law firm Faegre and Benson in Minneapolis, Minnesota, told the Jordan Times.

The ABA delegation members, who represent a major segment of corporate America, would tell their principals and clients in the U.S. that "they should look seriously into the opportunities available in Jordan," said Mr. Timawi.

"The legal environment is suitable and the business risk

that they carry is reduced in this environment," he added.

"We have to look at the final shape of the law, however."

That was a reference to a draft law on investments that is now before Parliament.

In his briefing of the delegation, Mr. Abu Ragheb reaffirmed the government's commitment to giving the private sector the dominant role in economy and to providing infrastructure to businesses.

The minister outlined the highlights of the investment climate in Jordan and the incentives offered to foreign capital, and expressed confidence that the new draft law that expands the incentives that is before Parliament now would soon be enacted, Mr. Timawi said.

The lawyer described the briefing at the AFM as excellent in that the delegation was given a clear picture of how the Jordanian stock market has grown since its inception in the late 70s and what developments have taken place in the market since then.

The lawyer quoted the AFM officials as saying that Jordan was slowly seeing the inflow of foreign capital to the stock market. "It is slow and minimal compared to the movement of international capital, but foreign capital is

Promotion Department of the ministry.

coming to Jordan," he quoted the officials as saying.

The Amman Chamber of Commerce received the delegation and outlined the business environment in the Kingdom. "We found people who told us they are here willing and ready to do business with the U.S.," said Mr. Timawi.

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More than 30 trade delegations have visited Jordan since then, but none of them of lawyers who wield strong influence in advising clients in the legal aspects of investing in Jordan and the general business environment in the Kingdom.

The 18-member delegation, headed by Jay Volgelson, head of the ABA's section on international law and practice, arrived here Saturday.

Central Bank of Jordan officials and representatives of the Amman Chamber of Industry and Trade Under-Secretary Mohammad Smadi and the head of the Investment

15 political parties denounce U.S. stand on continuation of sanctions on Iraq

AMMAN (Petra) — Fifteen Jordanian parties Sunday denounced the U.S. stand in opposition to the lifting of U.N. sanctions on Iraq since its 1990 invasion of Kuwait and described the position as immoral.

In a statement issued by the parties following a meeting of their leaders Sunday, the parties said the "unjust" siege continues for the fifth consecutive year thus depriving Iraq from exploiting its natural, industrial and agricultural resources and causing suffering and pain to its people.

The U.S., the statement continued, is leading a conspiracy whose aim is to starve and humiliate the Iraqi people in Baghdad, who had the in-

ternational norms, human rights principles and the U.N. Charter.

"The parties view this immoral American stand as really targeting the Arab and Islamic nations in their dearest spiritual values as well as their aspirations to build their development project and their right to progress and a dignified life," the statement said.

It said the U.S. continued to dominate the U.N. Security Council resolutions despite Iraq's adherence to and implementation of these resolutions and its recognition of the independence of Kuwait, and "despite an announcement by Rolf Ekeus an

of the U.N. arms inspector in Baghdad, who had the in-

spection teams in Iraq, of the end of his mission, and despite recent statements by Russia, France and China stressing the need to lift the sanctions because there was no reason to continue the embargo."

It said that it was not strange that the U.S., which insists on the continuation of the sanctions on Iraq, is the same country which is supporting the "Zionist entity" with all financial, military and political capabilities and supporting the Israeli stand on lifting the sanctions.

The parties also called on the Arab League and Arab and Islamic countries to work on lifting the sanctions, saying that it is not permissible to leave the people of Iraq, its children, women and elderly, die of hunger and be humiliated only to satisfy "American arrogance and to

serve Zionist goals and the whims of some Arab regimes."

The statement was signed by the Jordanian Arab Baath Socialist Party, the Arab Action Front Party, the Islamic Action Front, the Jordanian Communist Party, the Socialist Democratic Party, the Arab Baath Progressive Party, the Jordan Democratic People's Party, the Arab Popular Party, the Jordanian Arab Democratic Party, the Jordanian National Alliance Party, the Jordanian Democratic Popular Unity Party, the Unionists Party, the Jordanian Democratic Progressive Party, Wa'd Party and the Constitutional Front Party.

The Jordanian political parties urged the U.N., the Security Council and the international community to lift the sanctions and to end the siege, describing it as unique in the history of mankind.

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Indian premier faces crisis after poll defeat in key states

NEW DELHI (AFP) — India's ruling Congress (I) Party suffered a second election disaster in three months Sunday, a fresh crisis for embattled Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao.

The Congress was heading for a drubbing in the western state of Gujarat and poised to lose control of neighbouring Maharashtra, India's most industrialised state, for the first time since independence in 1947, officials said.

The verdict, from staggered elections last month, sent shock waves through the 109-year-old party, and even an imminent victory in the eastern state of Orissa after five years in the opposition failed to bring cheer.

The main opposition Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP, Indian People's Party) was heading towards a landslide win in Gujarat, sweeping 65 out of 99 declared seats and was leading in more than 50 of the state's 182 constituencies.

But the most stunning result came from Maharashtra,

India's financial hub where an alliance of the BJP and the Hindu militant Shiv Sena Party was poised to take power amid frenzied celebrations on the streets of the capital Bombay.

A despondent Maharashtra Chief Minister Sharad Pawar, a veteran Congress leader who in 1991 tried to become the prime minister before giving way to Mr. Rao, virtually conceded defeat.

"The results are certainly not favourable to the Congress," Mr. Pawar told AFP at his near-deserted residence normally crowded with supporters. He said the alliance would edge past the Congress in the final tally.

"We have not done well, we have to admit that," said Murli Deora, chief of the Congress unit in the city of Bombay, where the BJP and Shiv Sena won almost all 34 seats on offer.

Maharashtra and Gujarat went to the polls last month, and elections were completed

in Orissa Thursday. They were among four states electing legislatures in February and March in elections considered crucial for Premier Rao.

Mr. Rao desperately needed to win to quash the remnants of a revolt which erupted in the party after he led to it a shocking rout in two key southern states in December.

Although Mr. Pawar said the results were not a vote against Mr. Rao or his free-market reforms, the BJP demanded a snap parliamentary election, saying the Congress had lost the moral right to govern India.

A Congress MP said the party would face fresh internal trouble.

"We are in for a crisis now," said the MP. "There is no way the PM can evade responsibility. It is clear he has failed."

Added Aslam Sher Khan, an aide to former party strongman Arjun Singh who revolted against Mr. Rao af-

ter the December rout: "We need a thorough introspection to know what has gone wrong."

Congress sources said Arjun Singh, who was sacked by Mr. Rao from the party last month, would step up his campaign against the premier.

"The Congress is on the verge of collapse," added BJP spokesman M. Venkiah Naidu. "Rao has failed not only as prime minister but even as party president."

"He will come under pressure to step down," he said. "Whether he succumbs to the pressure has to be seen."

There was no word from Mr. Rao, who returned late Saturday from Copenhagen.

The imminent Congress defeat in Maharashtra, which includes India's financial capital Bombay, however panicked the industry, and analysts warned of a crash on the Bombay Stock Exchange Monday.

Prices began to tumble in curb deals Sunday.



Score of others were injured in street fights between rival political activists across Bihar, as early trends from the staggered February-March polls in two other states showed Mr. Rao's Congress Party trailing (AFP photo)

120 killed in fiery collision in India

MADRAS, India (R) — At

least 120 people were killed Sunday in a fiery collision involving a bus, a petro tanker and a tractor-trailer carrying a wedding party in southern India, authorities

by telephone.

The collision occurred when the tractor-trailer, carrying a marriage party of between 60 and 70 people, tried to overtake the passenger bus, a district spokesman said.

Most of the victims were burnt alive in a fire that broke out after the crash, he said.

"The passenger bus burst into flames and was charred beyond recognition," he said. The Press Trust of India

(PTI) said many of the victims were burnt alive inside the bus after the tanker exploded in flames.

Only one passenger, who escaped out the rear door of the bus, managed to survive, the news agency said.

Most of the victims were killed and 15 seriously injured when a mini-truck loaded with sulphuric acid cans overturned on a highway north of the capital New Delhi, burning passengers who were riding on the cans.

Last week, 17 people were killed and 15 seriously injured when a mini-truck loaded with sulphuric acid cans overturned on a highway north of the capital New Delhi, burning passengers who were riding on the cans.

French police crack down on faith healers

NICE, France (R) — Police along the French Riviera said Saturday they had launched a crackdown on a ring of faith healers as a judge jailed two people, expelled two others and placed five under judicial control. Police sources said the nine were part of a quack network from the West African nation of Guinea operating in southern France. For large fees, the healers offered to cure ailments including sterility and impotence, resolve family problems, help pass school exams, or win the lottery. Acting on complaints from disgruntled customers, police searching the healers' residences uncovered evidence of tens of thousands of francs in payments for dubious services. In one case, they said, a 66-year-old paid 50,000 francs (\$10,000) to win the lottery while a retired police officer, 65, paid 25,000 francs (\$5,000) to ensure his son would find a wife.

India's 'bandit queen' allows screening of film

NEW DELHI (R) — India's "bandit queen" Phoolan Devi has agreed to allow the screening of a controversial film about her life after the producer agreed to trim some sex and rape scenes she had found objectionable. Producer Bobby Bedi said Ms. Devi withdrew a suit from the Delhi High Court blocking the screening following an out-of-court settlement Friday with Britain's Channel 4, which commissioned the movie. Ms. Devi was accused of leading a massacre of 22 high-caste Hindus in a northern Indian village in 1981 and surrendered to police in 1983. She denied the murder charges. The Supreme Court released Ms. Devi, accused of murder in 55 cases, after she spent a decade in remand, saying the years she spent inside were punishment enough. Bandit Queen, based on a biography by author Mala Sen, was made by director Shekhar Kapur and paid for by Channel 4. It won critical acclaim at the Cannes Festival last summer, and was nominated for an Oscar Award in the Best Foreign Language Film category. But it was dropped from the Hollywood competition after Ms. Devi raised objections.

Kapur depicts Ms. Devi as a low-caste woman who rose up against members of high castes who exploited her. Ms. Devi recently formed an organisation to fight for the social and political rights of low castes. Bedi, who has the Indian rights to film, said Saturday that he agreed to trim a few frames from two rape scenes and a bedroom sex scene which embarrassed Ms. Devi. "We have come to a settlement," he told Reuters. "The total amount of film cut will not exceed one minute. They (cuts) will not have a major impact."

New flooding is forecast for California

SAN FRANCISCO (R) — New flooding was forecast for central California Sunday as the state reeled from storms which have killed at least seven people, inundated several towns and driven thousands from their homes.

Another five people were reported missing after at least three cars plunged into raging flood waters which swept away a bridge on a busy California freeway, officials said.

A series of powerful Pacific storms since Wednesday has created havoc throughout California, hitting many areas just recovering from devastating floods in January.

The storms caused mudslides and flooded motorways in southern California, flooded hundreds of homes and businesses in several northern California communities and brought down

trees and power lines, leaving 50,000 people without power.

Thirty-four of California's 58 counties declared local states of emergency due to the storms.

A spokesman for the California Office of Emergency Services said damage was "easily" in the millions of dollars, although the state had not yet estimated losses.

The cost of repairing or replacing washed-out bridges and damaged roads would be high, officials said.

January's storms caused at least \$1.3 billion of damage and led President Bill Clinton to declare much of the state a major disaster area.

The National Weather Service warned there could be record flooding later Sunday along the Salinas River in central California, affecting the towns of Salinas and Spreckels, about 90 miles (145 kms) south of San Francisco.

Local authorities issued mandatory evacuation orders to residents of several areas adjoining the river.

As night fell Saturday, rescue workers halted their search for occupants of at least three vehicles swept away by flood waters after a rain-swollen creek ripped out a 100-ft (30-metre) bridge along Interstate Highway 5 Friday near Coalinga, 150 miles (240 kms) south of San Francisco.

Emergency crews found the body of one woman in a car, but were unable to recover it because the normally placid creek was flowing so fast, a California Highway Patrol spokesman said.

The search near Highway 5 — a busy North-South motorway — was due to resume at first light Sunday, she said.

Revelations in Aquino killing reopen old wounds

MANILA, Philippines (AP) — New revelations by one of those convicted in the murder of Corazon Aquino's husband have stirred controversy and reopened old wounds in the controversial case, even within the former president's own family.

The Aug. 21, 1983 murder of former Sen. Benigno Aquino unleashed a political storm which culminated two and one-half years later in the "people power" uprising that toppled strongman Ferdinand Marcos and installed Corazon Aquino as president.

They are going around the world working on a few countries to be maysayers by telling those nations that global warming is not a threat, Mr. Wirth said.

Mr. Wirth also reiterated that Washington is prepared to make a commitment toward stabilising or reducing greenhouse gas emissions beyond the year 2000.

Throughout the years, the defendants have stuck to their story that Rolando Galman, a petty criminal who Marcos claimed was a Communist, slipped past security at Manila Airport and killed Sen. Aquino moments after he returned from exile in the United States.

Brig. Gatan has denied ever meeting either Mr. Galman or Sgt. Martinez.

Sgt. Martinez insisted that Mr. Galman shot Sen. Aquino and was then killed by the soldiers, just as the Marcos government had claimed. That finding was disputed by the 1990 trial court. It determined that

Sen. Aquino was shot by one of his military escorts standing above him on the airplane's staircase.

Nevertheless, Sgt. Martinez's account, if true, would support the theory of a conspiracy that went beyond those already named or convicted.

On Friday, the largest political coalition, Lakas-Laban, called for reopening the investigation "to end the lingering division among our people triggered by this dastardly act."

The coalition, which supports President Fidel Ramos, also urged the chairman of the opposition National People's Coalition, Eduardo Cojuangco, to reveal what he knows about the murder.

Ironically, Mr. Cojuangco, Mrs. Aquino's first cousin, was a close ally of Mr. Marcos and a friend of Brig. Gatan. On Thursday, Mrs. Aquino urged her cousin to tell what he knows "the interest of justice."

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national hero. His murderer is officially described as one of the salient events of Philippine history.

But despite Friday's call, the government has shown little interest in reviving the investigation. Two years ago, Sen. Blas Ople met the defendants in prison after announcing they had new information in the case.

Sen. Ople never revealed publicly what he had been told. After Sen. Ople's meeting, Justice Secretary Franklin Drilon said he would appoint a commission to study the "new information."

The commission quietly disappeared without announcing anything.

That has led to speculation that the government would just as soon avoid reopening the old wounds. Numerous figures from the Marcos regime, who may know more than they have ever revealed, hold key positions in politics and government today.

Mr. Ramos, a second cousin of Mr. Marcos, was military vice chief of staff at the time of the slaying. He later broke with Mr. Marcos and helped install Mrs. Aquino in power. Rep. Juan Ponce Enrile, defense minister in 1983, is running for the Senate on the Lakas-Laban ticket.

Kazakhstan is in crisis after parliament dissolved

ALMA-ATA (R) — The former Soviet Republic of Kazakhstan was plunged into political crisis when President Nursultan Nazarbayev bowed to a challenge from its Constitutional Court and dissolved parliament.

"Parliament is dissolved," Mr. Nazarbayev declared in a delayed reaction to a constitutional court ruling on March 6 that general elections were to start on March 16, ITAR-TASS news agency said.

He also told a hastily-called news conference Saturday night that he had accepted the government's resignation. But he re-appointed top ministers, including Prime Minister Akezhan Kazhegeldin, a caretaker administrator.

He gave Mr. Kazhegeldin and a handful of senior ministers a week to form a stop-gap government before fresh elections in two to three months' time. He also cancelled visits to Indonesia and Australia due to start on March 16, ITAR-TASS news agency said.

The 1994 elections, the first contested poll in the vast energy-rich state since it became independent from the Soviet Union in 1991, drew the fire of international observers at the time.

Mr. Nazarbayev, a former Communist Party boss, brushed aside their findings, which said they found cases of voting while election authorities had barred some potential candidates without giving a reason.

Despite the observers' misgivings, Western governments generally welcomed the election result because it ensured stability in Kazakhstan which, with its huge resources, has proved to be a magnet for Western investment.

But one candidate, Tatyana Klyatovskaya, a well-known journalist who stood in an Alma-Ata constituency, brought a case to the Constitutional Court saying election authorities had violated the basic law.

The court found in favour of Ms. Klyatovskaya's suit, deciding that the democratic principle of "one person one vote" had been broken and election boundaries were wrongly drawn.

Mr. Nazarbayev vetoed its ruling. But the court voted today to overrule him and said Saturday that its judgement meant it considered parliament to be illegal.

The fact that parliament illegal has received its final judicial confirmation," Mr. Nazarbayev told reporters.

He said he used his power of appointment in an interim government and would his executive authority to implement all legislation passed by the outgoing 177-seat parliament.

He earlier attended an emergency session of parliament, which appealed to him to amend the constitution to overrule the court's decision to suspend the court working.

Mr. Nazarbayev refused to be amendment and his decision to dissolve parliament ended a difficult relationship with the legislature.

Ex-police officer killed during Bangladesh strike

DHAKA (R) — A retired police officer was killed by unidentified gunmen in the southern port of Chittagong as an opposition-led 48-hour strike gripped Bangladesh Sunday, police said.

Harounur Rashid, 55, was shot outside his home in the city's Ambaria area, police said. They were unable to say if the shooting had any link to the strike.

"Many pro-strike activists carried guns and might have shot at Rashid willingly or unwillingly," one police officer told reporters.

Rashid angered terrorists, including those from political groups, by persistently opposing their unlawful acts," he said without giving details.

Like Chittagong, life in the capital Dhaka and other main cities was largely disrupted by the strike. Sunday is a day in predominantly Muslim Bangladesh.

Witnesses said police chased bomb and stone-throwing demonstrators in the capital, beat activists in Chittagong and drove away strike enforcers in Rajshahi.

The strike was aimed at forcing Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia, now in Copenhagen attending the United Nations Social Development Summit, to leave office to allow early elections under the supervision of a neutral caretaker administration.

Similar strikes in the past have failed, but main opposition leader Sheikh Hasina said Saturday the latest stoppage would start an all-out effort to oust Mrs. Khaleda.

"This time it's going to be

different," she told members of her Awami League. "She (Khaleda) is ruling by force, especially after opposition had quit parliament."

Mrs. Khaleda, elected in 1991, has consistently rejected the opposition's demands. Most opposition lawmakers resigned on Dec. 28 at the height of their anti-Vietnam War began.

Official newspapers told the story triumphantly and published grainy black-and-white photos of North Vietnamese soldiers carrying their red and gold flag onto the battlefield at the town, Buon Ma Thuot.

Buon Ma Thuot's culture and economy had never been developed. People's lives were dark and miserable.

Buon Ma Thuot was honoured to be chosen by the (Communist) Party Central Committee to be the starting point of the entire campaign to liberate the South," the government news agency declared.

Buon Ma Thuot's fall on March 10, 1975, so shook the confidence of the U.S.-backed South Vietnamese government that it ordered its troops to abandon the rest of the highlands. As southern soldiers and civilians fled to the coast in a chaotic retreat, Hanoi realised victory was within its grasp.

It began a blitzkrieg southern drive, racing against the coming monsoon season. The drive ended 51 days later with the capture of Saigon on April 30 and the fall of the South's government.

Vietnamese veterans including Gen. Van Tien Dung, who led the attack on Buon Ma Thuot, gathered at the still-sleepy town this week to mark the victory

Balladur plummets in new poll

PARIS (AFP) — French Prime Minister and presidential candidate Edouard Balladur fell heavily in a new poll released Sunday that tested opinion on the candidates' ability to govern.

Socialist candidate Lionel Jospin and Mr. Balladur's conservative rival, Mayor of Paris Jacques Chirac, significantly improved their performance on a month ago, said the poll, by the CSA Institute, to be published Monday by the economic daily Tribune Desfosses.

Mr. Balladur came top in only three of the 17 problems tested in the poll while Mr. Jospin came top with seven and Mr. Chirac second with five. The mayor of Paris was cited 14 times among the best two candidates after being named only twice a month ago.

The prime minister was judged best-equipped, to develop the French economy with 30 per cent, compared with 17 per cent for Chirac and 12 per cent for Mr. Jospin.

Mr. Balladur also came top for defending French interests in Europe and in foreign affairs, the poll said.

Mr. Jospin was deemed best-fitted to fight inequality, unemployment and defend the social security system while Mr. Chirac came top on such issues as security, immigration and the fight against corruption.

Another poll meanwhile confirmed Sunday Mr. Chirac's commanding lead over Mr. Balladur in voting intentions in the presidential, due in April-May.

The IFOP Institute poll published in the *Journal du Dimanche* Sunday paper said Mr. Chirac would beat Mr. Balladur in the second round run-off of the election on May 7 by 64 per cent to 36 per cent, compared with 52-48 in the last poll published a week ago.

If Socialist candidate Lionel Jospin makes it to the second round instead of Mr. Balladur after the first round of voting for all candidates on April 23, then Mr. Chirac would win 59-41, as against 56-44 in the previous poll.

The poll showed however that voters were even more uncertain of whom they would choose. The 58 per cent who said they were sure of their choice was down five points on last week.

On Sunday, Mr. Balladur urged his supporters to fight to redress the situation and to ignore the "hazards" of the polls.

"We have six weeks to get the message over," the prime minister told 2,000 supporters of the centre-right Union for French Democracy (UDF).

Mr. Balladur, who was seen as a shoo-in when the campaign began, was overtaken by Mr. Chirac at the beginning of March, and all opinion polls have shown his support slipping steadily.

The prime minister has been hit hard by a combination of political scandals affecting ministers in his government, a reluctance to come clean on his income from a share deal, and a distinct lack of charisma.

Mr. Chirac won more support from former rivals Saturday when an influential centrist block backed his campaign for the French presidency.

Members of the Union for French Democracy (UDF) party led by former President Valery Giscard D'Estaing were the latest to jump on Mr. Chirac's bandwagon as his lead in the polls widened over Mr. Balladur and Mr. Jospin.

Balladur supporters reacted by lashing out at those whose allegiance appeared to shift with the political winds.

"I have no respect for those who rally, their hand on their heart... to whoever is leading in the polls," Education Minister Francois Bayrou said on France-3 television, attacking "the weather vanes who turn toward Jacques Chirac."

Marie-Josephine Balladur, the premier's wife, in her first newspaper interview, predicted her husband would turn things around in time for the April-May election.

"I find him more at peace than usual, more calm," she told *Le Journal Du Dimanche*. "It's his battle. He will pursue it and wants to win."

Campaigning on the Indian Ocean island of Reunion, Mr. Jospin agreed the campaign was not yet over.

"What was not a sure thing for Mr. Balladur is also not a sure thing for Mr. Chirac," he told a campaign rally.



Hundreds of Shi'ite Muslim mourners carry coffins during the funeral ceremony of seven children who were killed in a bomb blast. Twelve people were killed and several others

13 killed in fresh Karachi violence; critics lash out at Ms. Bhutto

KARACHI, Pakistan (Agencies) — Nine political activists were shot dead in a hit-and-run attack, among 13 people killed Sunday in Karachi's latest violence.

Also, critics lashed out at Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto for failing to take strong action to halt the bloodshed.

In a related development, police arrested about 100 people Saturday night and Sunday in a roundup of suspects. But none has been charged in the recent terrorist attacks that have plagued the hub port city.

The latest mass killing occurred in western Karachi, where two rival factions of the Mohajir Qaumi Movement (MQM), an opposition group, have waged repeated battles.

Gunned with automatic weapons killed nine people when they fired on a vehicle belonging to the MQM (Haqqi) faction, according to police, who said the attackers probably came from the opposing MQM (Aita) faction.

Police in armoured cars were dispatched to the area to prevent further violence.

Police said they found four additional bodies in other violence scattered around Karachi.

Karachi has been the scene of almost daily violence for more than a year, and nearly 500 people have been killed in the past three months.

The violence attracted international attention this past week when two U.S. diplomatic personnel were fatally shot as they headed to work at the U.S. consulate.

The flag-draped coffins of the two victims, Jackie Van Landingham and Gary Durell, were flown out on U.S. Air Force plane Saturday evening. The flight was to arrive Sunday at Andrews Air Force Base outside Washington. An FBI team is in Karachi to help search for the unidentified attackers.

"They are making fools of themselves," Mr. Bhutto said of the government. "They don't know who is doing the killing and they can't stop it."

The local government, in-

cluding police protection, is widely seen as incompetent and there's a growing sense of lawlessness in Karachi, which serves as Pakistan's business capital.

Ms. Bhutto has blamed the fighting on ethnic, political, and religious rivalries. She said the country's powerful drug mafia was involved, and also blamed a "foreign hand," a reference to archivists.

Ms. Bhutto, meanwhile, held urgent talks Saturday with government and security officials in Karachi. There will be stepped up police patrols around mosques and other areas targeted for attack, but she announced no new plans to combat the trouble.

"It's as though she plays the same tape recording every time she is here in Karachi," said Ghafoor Ahmad, deputy leader of Jamaat-E-Islami, an opposition party. "This government is incapable of ensuring the life and security of the people."

Ms. Bhutto withdrew the army from the streets at the end of November, saying police were capable of maintaining order in the volatile city.

However, police have not been able to stop the spiraling violence or track down the killers. There have been about a dozen terrorist attacks in Karachi so far this year, but none of the cases have been solved.

Several leading members of Ms. Bhutto's ruling Pakistan People's Party said privately that they were disappointed she had not taken stronger measures.

Shoib Bokhari, one of the top leaders of MQM (Aita), said Friday that the blame for the violence should fall squarely on Ms. Bhutto's government.

"They are making fools of themselves," Mr. Bokhari said of the government. "They don't know who is doing the killing and they can't stop it."

The local government, in-

Buthelezi gives ultimatum to Zulu king

UMLAZI, South Africa (AFP) — Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) leader Mangosuthu Buthelezi turned the screws Sunday on Zulu King Goodwill Zwelithini, giving him two months to unite the Zulu nation or face being sidelined.

Speaking to 10,000 supporters at a stadium in this black township on the fringe of the Indian Ocean port city of Durban, Mr. Buthelezi told the monarch not to call an "imbiro," or national gathering, in two months. Zulu chiefs would call one themselves.

Mr. Buthelezi said the monarch was loved by his subjects and ought to lead the fight for the restoration of the Zulu kingdom, but if King Zwelithini refused to, Zulu chiefs would go ahead without him.

Sunday's meeting, also an "imbiro," was called by IFP-aligned chiefs who have ac-

cused the king of forgetting his followers.

The rally was held in defiance of King Zwelithini, who claims only he has the authority to call an "imbiro." The monarch's advisers claim the gathering was a deliberate attempt to dethrone King Zwelithini.

Mr. Buthelezi said, however, it was called to bind the six million Zulus living under tribal rule in KwaZulu-Natal province, in two months. Zulu chiefs would call one themselves.

Under the covenant, King Zwelithini would become a constitutional monarch with no political power while the province would be empowered with sufficient autonomy to ensure Zulu self-determination.

Mr. Buthelezi, who is also home affairs minister in South Africa's government of

national unity, told the meeting central government attempts to interfere in the affairs of the Zulu nation had succeeded in isolating the king from his subjects.

The IFP leader has grown steadily apart from King Zwelithini, his nephew, since September.

The split began when King Zwelithini sacked Mr. Buthelezi as his traditional prime minister, saying he wanted to move away from party politics.

Mr. Buthelezi, however, claims that the monarch has moved into the camp of the IFP's arch-rivals, Nelson Mandela's African National Congress (ANC), and is being manipulated by ANC-supporting Zulu chiefs.

On Sunday, he said Zulu chiefs were trying to pave the way to allow the king to return from "spiritual exile" to his people.

Sri Lanka offers talks with rebels in April

COLOMBO (R) — Sri Lankan President Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga has invited Tamil Rebels to open political talks with the government next month, official sources said Sunday.

She sent a letter to rebel leader Velupillai Prabhakaran last week saying the government is prepared to start political talks between April 2 and 10, one source told Reuters.

The source said Mrs. Kumaratunga had told Mr. Prabhakaran that the government's package of proposals to end the island's ethnic conflict, which began after Mrs. Kumaratunga's People's Alliance won parliamentary

polls last August, have been deadlocked since January.

Meanwhile, for three days unidentified attackers threw stones as big as bricks at employees and builders driving to the site of a new Voice Of America (VOA) relay station, U.S. officials said Friday.

No one was hurt, but 10 vehicles were damaged in the attacks Monday, Tuesday and Thursday, said a statement from the U.S. Information Service.

Talks between both sides on ending the government's economic embargo on the Tamil-held peninsula and on reconstruction and safe passage, which began after Mrs. Kumaratunga's People's Alliance won parliamentary

polls last August, have been deadlocked since January.

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Croatia allows U.N. troops to stay for now

Akashi's plane hit by gunfire while landing at Sarajevo

SARAJEVO (R) — A gunshot hit the jet carrying U.N. special envoy Yasushi Akashi as it landed at Sarajevo Airport Sunday, piercing the fuselage and narrowly missing a passenger's head, U.N. officials said.

A bullet hole was clearly visible on the right side of the plane's fuselage just behind the rear window. Now one was reported injured in the incident.

"This was an outrageous attack against the (U.N.) secretary general's special representative," said Lieutenant-Colonel Gary Coward, a U.N. spokesman in Sarajevo.

NATO warplanes thundered over the airport afterwards in a display of strength, firing chaff and flares to confuse any anti-aircraft missiles.

U.N. sources who were present at the airport as Mr. Akashi landed said at least three shots were fired and seemed to have come from Bosnian Serb positions south and east of the runway.

The airport sites between Bosnian government and separatist Serb front lines.

The incident was the most serious attack on a senior U.N. official in nearly three years of conflict in Bosnia.

Reporters asked Mr. Akashi whether the country was sliding back towards war.

"I would not use such a dramatic term but we are concerned about the degradation of the situation," he said.

"The purpose of my visit is to see if we can stem the tide of this degradation."

Bosnian government and Serb leaders signed a four-month truce and a related

freedom of movement agreement which expire on May 1.

Increasingly serious violations of the accords prompted Mr. Akashi's visit.

A Red Cross plane was hit by a machine gun round Saturday at the airport, which then closed for the day.

Sniper fire has claimed a number of victims in Sarajevo over the past week, including two young girls who were killed on the Serb side of the line Saturday.

In retaliation, Bosnian Serbs closed key civilian supply routes in and out of the city, known locally as "blue routes" because they are policed by U.N. peacekeepers.

Serb harassment of U.N. supply and humanitarian aid efforts in Bosnia has also increased dramatically in recent days.

Meanwhile, Croatia agreed Sunday that U.N. troops could remain on its soil until they are replaced by a scaled-down force, a move hailed by the United States as a major step in preventing a wider Balkan war.

Croatian President Franjo Tudjman and U.S. Vice President Al Gore announced the deal, which has yet to be negotiated at the United Nations and could prove difficult to put into practice, after meeting on the margins of a U.N. Social Summit.

"This is very good news... I consider this a major step away from war and towards peace," Mr. Gore told a news conference.

Croatia had said previously that some 12,000 U.N. troops would have to leave after their mandate expires at the end of this month, complaining that the force did no more than consolidate the hold of rebel Serbs over part of Croatia.

The U.N. peacekeeping force was put in place to separate Croatian government soldiers and rebel Serbs in early 1992 after six months of war in which 10,000 people were killed.

The United States would push for a new U.N. Security Council resolution on a replacement force to be ready by the end of March.

If that did not happen, Mr. Gore said, there would be "an interim period" during which the current force could remain.

Having insisted for weeks that U.N. troops would have to leave by June following the expiry of their mandate, Mr. Tudjman said Sunday: "There is no deadline."

in neighbouring Bosnia is due to end on May 1.

U.N. Secretary-General Boutros Ghali also met Mr. Tudjman in Copenhagen Sunday and said in a statement afterwards he was "pleased with this development." Dr. Ghali and Mr. Tudjman will meet again in New York later this week.

The agreement to provide a new force, expected to number around 5,000 troops, allowed Mr. Tudjman to deny he had backed down from earlier demands that the current U.N. force leave.

"Croatia only wanted to speed up the solution of the problem of the occupied parts of Croatia," Mr. Tudjman said.

Mr. Gore expressed sympathy for Croatia's frustrations over the Serb-held Krajina region, which makes up around one third of the former Yugoslav republic. But he added:

"I expressed our deep concern that some 12,000 U.N. troops would have to leave after their mandate expires at the end of this month, complaining that the force did no more than consolidate the hold of rebel Serbs over part of Croatia.

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Baltic leaders cool towards Russian invitation

COPENHAGEN (R) — Baltic leaders agreed Sunday to wait and watch Russia's behaviour over coming weeks before deciding if they should attend May celebrations in Moscow marking the 50th anniversary of the end of World War II.

Latvian President Guntis Ulmanis said he and his counterparts from Estonia, Lennart Meri and Lithuania, Algirdas Brazauskas, met on

the sidelines of a U.N. Social Summit to discuss relations with Russia and other issues.

"Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia suffered greatly during Soviet occupation. The feeling at home is that these three countries

Christopher sees chance of Israel-Syria breakthrough

DAMASCUS (AFP) — U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher on Sunday spoke of new hope for a breakthrough on the stalled Israeli-Syrian track of the peace process ahead of talks here with President Hafez Al Assad.

"I feel we have a new opportunity on that track," Mr. Christopher told reporters in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, before heading here for talks Monday with the Syrian leader. He was due to arrive late Sunday.

Meanwhile, Syria indicated it was in no mood to make territorial concessions to break the deadlock in talks with Israel, which have remained suspended since February 1994.

"Ignoring the core of the problem will only lead to further conflicts and bloody violence in the region and peace will never be established so long as Israel continues to occupy Arab land," said the Syria Times.

The government newspaper Tishrin stressed "Syria cannot exchange peace for Israeli promises."

"Experience has shown us that Israel does not respect its promises and that its territorial ambitions have blinded its leaders," it added.

The Israeli-Syrian talks are deadlocked over the scope

and timing of an Israeli withdrawal from the Golan Heights.

Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin has refused a total withdrawal from the Golan, offering instead a small-scale troop pullout from the strategic plateau over a period of 30-36 months to test Syria's desire for peace. Syria swiftly turned it down.

Mr. Christopher failed seven times last year to break the deadlock. The talks in Damascus will be his first with Syrian leaders this year.

He said Sunday that recent statements by Mr. Rabin were "an indication that he (Rabin) felt that it was feasible for him to move ahead on that track."

Speaking after talks with Mr. Christopher Thursday, Mr. Rabin said he was ready to resume contacts with Syria quickly.

The Syrian and Israeli army chiefs-of-staff met in Washington on Dec. 22.

U.S. Middle East coordinator Dennis Ross held talks with Israeli chief-of-staff Amnon Shahak Saturday on the security guarantees demanded by Israel ahead of a withdrawal from the Golan.

The Israeli newspaper Maariv reported that Mr. Rabin had given a message to Mr. Christopher for the Sy-

rians.

The message was, "the Israeli government can overcome the differences with Syria, that it has the political strength to make a peace accord and to win a referendum on the issue."

Mr. Rabin has promised a referendum if Israel returns a substantial area of the Golan.

Foreign Minister Shimon Peres told Sunday's Haaretz newspaper: "There are still 20 months before general elections."

"Time is short and the danger of missing the opportunity calls for redoubled effort. We have 20 months to do it."

Mr. Christopher began a week-long tour of the Middle East Wednesday, prompted by a sense that "it was time for Israel to move further on the Palestinian, Jordanian and Syrian tracks," a U.S. official said.

Mr. Christopher said the tour was "timely and appropriate."

In Jeddah he also called on Arab states to lift their economic boycott of Israel.

"The boycott must come to an end now," he said, while praising the six-nation Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) for pledging last September to lift the indirect embargo which hits companies trading with Israel.

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Qatari, Omani ministers absent from Christopher talks on Iraq

JEDDAH (Agencies) — Gulf foreign ministers Sunday backed American efforts to keep U.N. sanctions on Iraq.

A joint statement issued after a meeting with U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher urged the U.N. Security Council "to resist any amendments to the sanctions regime until Iraq fully complies with all its obligations."

Most members of the six-nation Gulf Cooperation Council, particularly Saudi Arabia and Kuwait who feel most threatened by Iraq, agree with Washington that the oil and trade embargo must remain until Baghdad complies fully with all U.N. conditions imposed after the 1991 Gulf war.

The two states' share of the world oil market could shrink considerably if Iraqi petroleum starts flowing again.

But in a deepening rift, Oman and Qatar did not send foreign ministers to the meeting.

They sent ambassadors instead in a clear message of protocol to the U.S. secretary after hosting Iraqi Foreign Minister Mohammad Saeed Al Sahaf last week.

The two states support Baghdad's assertion that it has complied with the necessary conditions for a lifting of sanctions, including dismantling its weapons of mass destruction and recognising Kuwait's sovereignty.

The U.N. Security Council

is to meet Monday to hold its two-monthly review of the sanctions against Iraq, though diplomats say there is unlikely to be any change.

Mr. Christopher told a news conference after the talks: "We don't believe that Iraq is even close to complying. Iraq's record of compliance is genuinely a truce."

His talk here also focused on the Arab economic "boycott" (against Israel) must come to an end now," Mr. Christopher said, while praising the GCC for pledging to lift last September the indirect embargo which hits companies trading with Israel.

Gulf states explained they had now put in place most legal and administrative measures to end the indirect boycott, a U.S. official said.

Sunday's joint statement referred in particular to the U.N. demand that Iraq release all prisoners of war. The statement said 600 remain in Iraq or unaccounted for. Iraq has claimed it has no more prisoners.

The statement urged Iraq to accept a one-time sale of \$1.6 billion worth of oil to finance humanitarian purchases and costs of U.N. operations in the country.

Mr. Christopher was scheduled to meet King Fahd later Sunday before leaving for Damascus to meet Syrian President Hafez Al Assad Monday.

Secret Israel-PLO withdrawal deal reported

(Continued from page 1)

in the first such move in the absence of a Palestinian legislative council.

The Palestinian Authority has "decided to go to the people to solicit their feed-back," an official statement on the workshop said.

Israel and the PLO resume Tuesday in Cairo negotiations on elections to a Palestinian autonomy council and the extent of its legislative powers.

The two sides have agreed to a July 1 deadline to try to conclude an agreement for Israeli army redeployment and elections.

Palestinians say they will need two months to prepare for the vote, but international experts cooperating with the PLO say four months is a more realistic time-frame.

The debate's conclusions will be considered in drawing a final law on local government which will be ratified by Mr. Arafat, said Hussein Al Aaraj, deputy minister of local government in the authority.

Similar to current legislation on housing, the local government law will remain effective until parliament is elected, and will then be put to it for approval.

At the workshop, held in Gaza City's Shawa Cultural Centre, Mahmoud Al Zahbar, leader of Hamas, objected to the draft's appointment rather than election of

municipal leaders.

He also criticised the proposed "security" functions for town halls. "It will mean future tyranny by a corrupt mayor or governor," he said.

"Are we talking about a security apparatus or a local government system?" he questioned.

Hamas, opposed to the autonomy agreement with Israel, has said it would not run in elections to a parliament but would join local government elections.

Sunday's workshop was organised by the ministry of local government, headed by Saeb Erakat.

Mr. Arafat and Mr. Peres who met Thursday set a July

Newspaper move not enough

(Continued from page 12)

us nothing, but demand a lot from us," he complained, noting that the Kingdom was perhaps the only country which levies customs duties on newsprint.

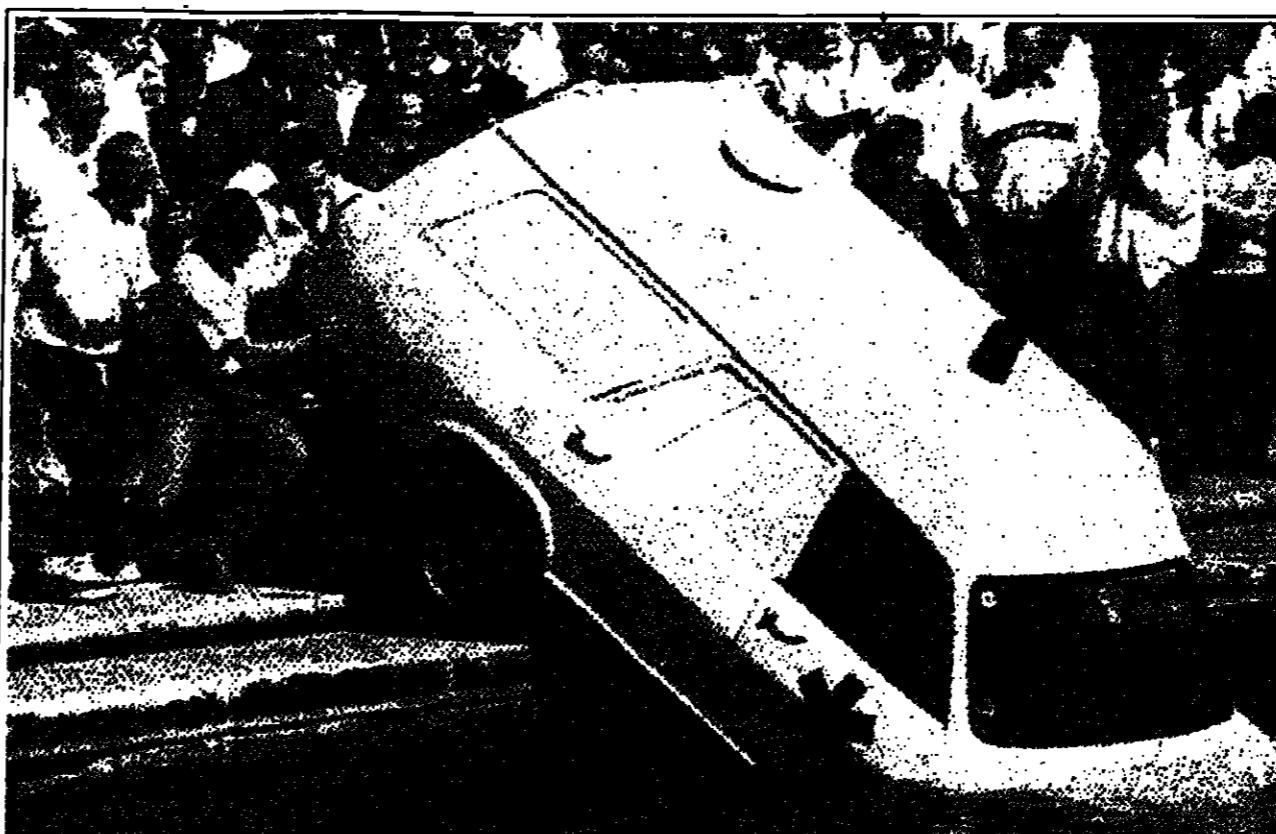
The government introduced customs duties on newsprint last year after the newspaper establishments reported high profits in previous years. But, the publishers now point out, those profits were made when newsprint used to cost 30 percent of what it costs today.

Mr. Abu Libdeh estimated that the publishing com-

panies suffer a loss of about 30 to 40 fils on each sold copy of daily newspaper since the actual production cost is more than the 150 fils price. The shortfall is made up by advertising revenues.

Seif Al Sharif, director-general of the Jordan Press and Publication Company, which publishes Al Dustour, issued a similar call for a total exemption from all customs duties and related charges for newsprint last week.

Al Ra'i imports 7,000 tonnes of newsprint every year while Al Dustour's imports are estimated at between 5,000 and 6,000 tonnes and Al Aswaq's at 2,500 tonnes.



PROTEST THE FRENCH WAY: Ambulance drivers push one of their vehicles into Marseilles old port harbour on Sunday to protest a new hospital regulation which would

lighten their workload by transferring to private taxis the transportation of certain patients (AFP photo)

NEWS IN BRIEF

Israel returns lost water-ski to King

EILAT (AFP) — Israel has handed back to King Hussein a water-ski he lost 15 years ago in the Red Sea when the two neighbours were technically still at war, a newspaper reported Sunday. The ski, bearing the King's crest of arms, washed up in 1980 on the shores of Eilat, adjacent to Aqaba. It was kept as a souvenir in the local water sports club. Following the signing of a peace treaty last October 26, club chairman Ami Maoz decided to give it back. He handed it to the head of the Royal Jordanian Water Sports Federation, Simon Khoury, who attended a wind-surfing competition in Eilat last week, the Maariv newspaper said.

3 Arab countries at Israel book fair

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Egypt, Jordan and Morocco were Sunday to attend an Israeli book fair for the first time, the organisers said. Publishers from the three countries, including Dar El Hada of Egypt and Editions Eddin of Morocco, will be represented at the event to be opened in the evening by President Ezer Weizman. "I warmly welcome the participation of our Arab neighbours as it constitutes an important step toward developing a deeper understanding among our peoples," said the fair's managing director, Zev Birger.

Papal envoy tours Gulf states

touring the Gulf, on Saturday gave a message from Pope John Paul II to Sultan Qaboos of Oman, the official agency ONA said. The papal envoy, Jean-Louis Tauran, passed on the message through Oman's Deputy Minister for Cabinet Affairs Sayyid Ben Fahd Ben Mahmood Al Said with whom he discussed "the need to coordinate efforts in the service of world peace," the agency said. Before arriving in Muscat Mr. Tauran visited Abu Dhabi, where he gave a similar message to United Arab Emirates President Sheikh Zayed Ben Sultan Al Nahyan, officials said. His Gulf tour comes as the Pope prepares to meet soon with Iraq's Deputy Prime Minister Tareq Aziz. During their last meeting on June 28 Mr. Aziz called for Vatican intervention to help secure an easing of United Nations sanctions imposed when Iraq invaded Kuwait in 1990. The Pope has called several times for dialogue in order to ease the suffering of the Iraqi people under the oil and trade embargo.

Iran to install two oil rigs in Caspian

NICOSIA (R) — Iran will install two oil rigs in the Caspian Sea during the next Iranian year starting on March 21 and might set up a refinery in a Caspian coast province, the Iranian news agency IRNA reported. It quoted Oil Minister Gholamreza Aghazadeh as saying on Saturday that one of the rigs was under construction and the other would be rented for exploration in the Caspian sea. He gave no details about the size of the rigs or say whether they would be used in any of the three oilfields in Azerbaijan's sector of the Caspian to be developed by an international consortium including Iran. "If appropriate conditions are provided, a refinery will be established in the northern province of Mazandaran," the minister said. Iran's eighth oil refinery, now under construction at the southern port of Bandar Abbas, is due to be completed in about two years.

Egypt to set up anti-pollution police

CAIRO (AFP) — Egypt is to set up a police squad to crack down on the growing problem of pollution. Interior Minister Hassan Al Atti said Sunday. Egypt is also preparing new legislation to fight polluters, he told the Middle East Times in an interview. "There is nothing currently in the law to punish people, it is not really considered a crime," he said. The only existing laws were in protected areas such as Ras Mohammed on the Red Sea "where hunting and fishing are prohibited," he added. All government bodies were working together to preserve "the environment and the health of the citizens. We're setting up a new police department towards this end," Mr. Atti said. Egypt is to present a working paper on environmental crime to a U.N. crime conference in Cairo from April 27 to May 10.

Police smash antiques smuggling ring

LONDON (AFP) — British, Chinese and Egyptian police have cracked a multi-million-dollar smuggling ring in which priceless antiques came into England disguised as tourist trinkets, according to a newspaper report Sunday. A police officer was among six suspects arrested in Britain in one of the biggest operations ever mounted by Scotland Yard's arts and antiquities squad, the Sunday Telegraph said. Egyptian police arrested 24 suspects in Egypt, the report said. Detective Chief Inspector Charles Hill, who headed "Operation Buttercup," said his team uncovered thousands of Chinese and Egyptian artefacts in southwestern England, many of them thousands of years old and some valued individually at more than £1 million (\$1.6 million). The total value of the haul was "incalculable," he said.

Khomeini's son admitted to hospital

TEHRAN (R) — Ahmad Khomeini, the son of Iran's late leader Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, was admitted to hospital on Sunday because of heart and respiratory problems, Tehran Radio said. "Ahmad Khomeini was hospitalised this morning due to cardio-respiratory ailment," the radio said. Iran's spiritual leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei visited Mr. Khomeini, a 48-year-old cleric, at Baqiat Allah hospital in Tehran. Mr. Khomeini's office asked the Iranian people to pray for his health.

Kurds claim 90 Iraqi troops killed

NICOSIA (AP) — A Kurdish rebel group claims its guerrillas have killed nearly 100 Iraqi troops in attacks on military positions in northern Iraq.

The official Islamic Republic News Agency of Iran, monitored in Nicosia, quoted officials of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) as saying that another eight officers and soldiers were captured in the fighting Saturday in the Kalija region in the eastern sector of oil-rich Kirkuk province.

The leftist PUK, one of the main Kurdish rebel movements, gave no indications of its own casualties in the latest clashes with the Iraqi army.

The fighting erupted March 5 around Chamchamal, 60 kilometres east of Kirkuk city.

The leftist PUK said it launched the offensive against the Iraqi military headquarters in Kalija Friday night.

There was no independent confirmation of the battle or any comment from Baghdad.

But Iraq did acknowledge last Tuesday that its forces had fought "defensive actions" against the PUK around Chamchamal, the first admission the military was involved in fighting against the Kurds in two years.

Over the last week, the PUK claims to have killed or captured hundreds of Iraqi soldiers and says many more have defected or deserted.

Chamchamal lies below the 36th Parallel, which is the southern boundary of the self-rule Kurdish enclave and the "no-fly zone" enforced by the United States and its allies since April 1991 to protect the rebels.

They were in action against rebel positions below the 36th Parallel last week.

Over the last few weeks, Kurdish officials have claimed the Iraqis have been building up their forces in northern Iraq for an offensive against the PUK.

They claim Iraq seeks a new confrontation with the United Nations to force the Security Council to lift devastating trade sanctions imposed after Iraq invaded Kuwait in August 1990.

Summit fails to answer questions

(Continued from page 1) available the means of their implementation."

Bangladeshi Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia called for developing countries to be allowed to play a role in the decision-making bodies that dominate the world economy, such as the G-7 industrialised countries (Britain, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan and the United States).

Structural adjustment policies should have "a more human face," she said, referring to the austerity policies which the IMF and World Bank have forced upon a large number of developing nations.

Cuban President Fidel Castro denounced the "irrationality of the system," citing as proof the fact that "unemployment cannot be reduced" in industrialised countries.

The week of meetings Copenhagen — five days intense debate over the 8-page declaration — brought just two token gestures: debt relief and a U.S. plan to re-allocate \$100 million in education funds to be used for girls' education.

The Copenhagen Declaration itself was criticised by many Third World delegations for failing to provide financial resources or make firm commitments to tackle the problem of developing countries' debt, estimated at nearly \$2 billion.

Danish Prime Minister Poul Nyrup Rasmussen, in the summit, told assembled leaders they "living in a world of unacceptable contradictions" and urged rich countries to start acting.

See story on page 12

Clinton picks New York investment banker to head World Bank

WASHINGTON (AFP) — President Bill Clinton nominated investment banker James Wolfensohn Saturday as the next president of the World Bank to succeed the ailing Lewis Preston.

Mr. Clinton said in a statement he will ask the bank's board of directors to confirm the nomination of Mr. Wolfensohn, 61, who is president and chief executive officer of James D. Wolfensohn, Inc. of New York.

He also has served as chairman of the John F. Kennedy Centre for the Performing Arts in Washington since 1990, without pay, in an attempt to rescue the financially troubled arts facility.

"James Wolfensohn had already had an extraordinary career in finance and public service, spanning four decades and three continents," Mr. Clinton said.

"At a time when the role

and mission of and funding for the World Bank and other

international financial institutions are major issues, the deep respect for Mr. Wolfensohn already enjoys will allow him to serve as a forceful advocate for the bank and development issues," he added.

Mr. Wolfensohn was not immediately available for comment.

Mr. Clinton also praised outgoing bank president Preston, 68, who announced last month he has cancer. He cited his leadership of the World Bank, which "is playing a major, constructive role in regions such as the Middle East, Russia and the former Soviet Union."

In a statement, Mr. Preston welcomed Mr. Wolfensohn's nomination, saying: "He has proven himself to be a strong leader, and there is no doubt that the bank will prosper in his able hands."

The World Bank post pays \$190,000 a year, with a \$95,000 expense allowance.

By tradition, the U.S. government names the head of the Washington-based World Bank and the nomination is ratified by the bank's executive directors.

The multilateral World Bank is the largest source of non-commercial capital for developing nations and lends more than \$20 billion a year. Its critics say that it is a huge bureaucracy that tramples on the social and environmental needs of its debtors.

Americans have held the presidency since the bank was established by the Allied powers to help rebuild Europe in the aftermath of World War II.

Mr. Wolfensohn previously was an executive partner of Salomon Brothers in New York and chairman of Salomon Brothers International in London, and managing director of Darling and Company in Australia.

He has also served on a number of boards, including

the Rockefeller Foundation, CBS Incorporated, the Population Council, the Institute for Advanced Study at Princeton, the Business Council for Sustainable Development, Continental Grain and Carnegie Hall Corporation.

A naturalised U.S. citizen born in Sydney, Australia, Mr. Wolfensohn took up fencing at 18 and within five years became Australian national champion. He was a member of Australia's fencing team in the 1956 Olympics.

He was educated at the University of Sydney and graduated from the Harvard University Business School. He served in the Royal Australian Air Force before entering the investment banking field.

He is also an accomplished cellist who performed at Carnegie Hall to mark his 50th birthday.

Rich countries will hound poor over labour laws — Dunkel

NEW DELHI (AFP) — Rich countries will persist in trying to protect their trade from poor countries, notably over rules applying to cheap labour, the architect of the new regime of world free has said.

"Protectionism will go on trying to find its way into world markets, it will use every cover available," Arthur Dunkel, former director-general of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), now the World Organisation, told a world trade seminar.

He added that the latest example of protectionism was a social clause proposed by developed countries to link world trade with issues such as labour standards in developing countries — including child and prison labour.

Such a clause could restrict or prohibit imports from countries which did not adhere to universal standards, restraining the exports of developing nations, he said.

The social clause would make Third World producers even less competitive, they fear.

"We have to tackle the problem," Mr. Dunkel said, calling for a "clear-cut definition" of the issues at stake for

evacuate the problem by sweeping it under the carpet."

"The trading community will have to come to grips with them in order to ensure that public opinion and legislators around the world are not trapped in demagogic arguments," the Swiss economist said.

Advocates of the clause say it is needed to ensure that social issues keep pace with economic progress. Failing to institute such safeguards, they say, would be tantamount to collaborating in the exploitation of workers in developing countries.

The clause is also designed to ensure fair trade by preventing developing countries from gaining unfair advantages through cheap labour.

Poor nations have argued that the trade advantage is already tilted heavily in favour of rich countries which enjoy superior technology and economies of scale and access to finance.

The social clause would make Third World producers even less competitive, they fear.

"We have to tackle the problem," Mr. Dunkel said, calling for a "clear-cut definition" of the issues at stake for

a solution to be thrashed out.

He said he personally preferred the issue to be handled by a specialist agency such as the International Labour Organisation (ILO), but said there was no way that parties to the WTO could escape tackling it.

Indian industrialist Govind Hari Singhania said at the seminar that the emergence of such non-trade issues as labour on the world trade stage were "highly detrimental to the growth of the multilateral spirit."

"These are major areas of concern for us," Mr. Singhania said. Non-tariff barriers had greater potential to distort trade flows than tariffs, he said.

Mr. Dunkel said that the world trade accord signed in December in the Moroccan city of Marrakesh had created "good chances" for merchandise trade being subject to a single instrument of protection — customs duties.

But, Mr. Dunkel said, "there are a host of policies and practices that distort competition in world markets, and we all know that each national market is part and parcel of the world market of others."

Iran for end to dollar-linked oil pricing — paper

TEHRAN (R) — Iran backs a proposal to review the policy of linking crude oil prices to the dollar, an Iranian newspaper reported Sunday, quoting a commentary on Iran's state-run radio.

The dollar plunged to record lows against the Japanese yen and the German mark last week, undercutting the buying power of Iran's petrodollars in its major import markets.

"Iran backs a proposal aimed at protecting the economies of oil exporting nations against potential fluctuations in the value of the U.S. dollar," the daily Iran News quoted a commentary by Iran Radio on Saturday as saying.

Oil producing nations should revise the pricing system "to avoid further retardation of their progress due to links with America's crisis-stricken economy," the radio said.

The English-language paper said a "recent call by the United Arab Emirates" to consider pricing changes after the dollar's sharp fall was similar to one of Iran's long-standing demands.

UAE's minister of state for finance and industrial affairs, Ahmad Bin Hamad Al Tayer, in remarks that do not necessarily reflect government policy, urged the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) to revise its dollar-pegged oil pricing system.

"Pricing of raw materials can be done through a basket of currencies... or through selling the exports of developing states."

U.S., Cuba clash at U.N. summit on market economics

COPENHAGEN (R) — The United States and Cuba clashed over market economics at the United Nations Social Summit Sunday, setting out contrasting visions of how the world can best tackle poverty and unemployment.

But on the last day of the week-long gathering, all 120 countries represented in Copenhagen were set to approve a declaration and an action plan to ward off social explosion as the world moves into the 21st century.

Vice President Al Gore, insisting that Washington would maintain foreign aid despite pressures from the new Congress to cut it, said the United States believed free markets alone could guarantee permanent economic advance around the world "as any other form of economic organisation, and has the demonstrated potential to create broadly distributed new wealth," he declared.

But Cuba's President Fidel Castro, casting aside his usual olive-green fatigues for a dark business suit and matching tie, said there could be no social development "where chaos and anarchy reign under the blind and savage laws of the market."

The "neo-liberal doctrine" being imposed on the world since the fall of Soviet communism, he said, "sacrifices shamelessly in the underdeveloped countries spending on health, education, culture, sport, social security, health housing and other basic needs of the people."

The conference, the Summit for Social Development, has been told that there are more than one billion people living in poverty around the world and 120 million — well over one third of the global work force — unemployed or under-employed.

Speakers from both developed and developing countries have warned that unless these people are given some hope for a better future, disaster lay ahead.

"The widening gap between rich and poor is more explosive than ideological differences," President Daniel Arap Moi of Kenya said.

"There can be no economic stability or security in society without social justice," said Swiss Social Minister Daniel Berset.

Speaking for the European Union, Commission President Jacques Santer struck a more optimistic note, saying he hoped history would record that the gathering had not been a "North-South summit."

"On the contrary, it will be a decisive summit for the

And he welcomed what he said was the agreement that a "social dimension" would be written into rules and attitudes guiding the work of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund in determining their aid policies.

President Castro, who some diplomats had feared might upset the gathering by announcing he could not support the final documents, disappointed radical Danish leftists by telling them on Saturday that he would endorse the summit's conclusions.

He argued that the common element uniting all countries present was the recognition that poverty had to be tackled. This was a good start that could be built on, he told the radicals, some of whom booed him.

The documents have been condemned as ineffective by hundreds of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and pressure groups who also came to Copenhagen and issued their own counter-declaration calling for much more radical

China, U.S. sign copyright agreement

BEIJING (AFP) — China and the United States Saturday signed a landmark agreement on the protection of intellectual property rights but failed to resolve their dispute over extending market access and China's entry to the WTO.

U.S. Trade Representative Mickey Kantor and Chinese Foreign Trade Minister Wu Yi sipped champagne after signing the copyright agreement, forged after a sanctions deadline lapsed last month.

Mr. Wu said the deal marked a "turning point" in bilateral ties.

"On the contrary, it will be a decisive summit for the

And he welcomed what he said was the agreement that a "social dimension" would be written into rules and attitudes guiding the work of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund in determining their aid policies.

The official Xinhua news agency quoted Mr. Kantor as saying the agreement was "a two sides could overcome difficulties through their joint efforts. The accord was a "good one" and "both sides are winners," he was quoted as saying.

But behind the friendly words, wide differences on the issue of market access came into sharp focus.

MOSCOW (R) — Russia plans to increase gold output by the year 2000, but crucial investment largely depends on development of a domestic gold market, senior gold industry officials said Saturday.

The head of the State Precious Metals Committee, Yevgeny Bychkov, said a development programme would be presented to government experts on March 15.

"We have great hopes for this programme. It should increase our potential," he told a news conference.

Mr. Bychkov, speaking after a presentation by Russia's new Gold Club, gave no figures. But the Sverdnya newspaper said planned output this year was 149 tonnes, up from 131.9 tonnes in 1994.

"Gold production has been stable for three years," Mr. Bychkov said. "The main task now is attracting investment."

Mr. Bychkov said the Gold Club, set up late last year to oversee creation of a domestic market, would play a key role in attracting finance from Russian and foreign companies.

"We have to create certain conditions in order to attract the banks," he said, referring to a draft presidential decree that might govern the domestic market until a new precious metals law is passed by

parliament.

Gold Club President Mikhail Bazhanov said the main priority was to lay legal foundations for the circulation of gold within Russia as a financial instrument, as collateral for credits or securities.

"In this way, we shall be supporting gold production," he said. "We must introduce the necessary laws on gold and precious metals circulation and on the circulation of securities."

"We have to create certain conditions in order to attract the banks," he said, referring to a draft presidential decree that might govern the domestic market until a new precious metals law is passed by

parliament.

The Gold Club groups about 60 Russian commercial banks, gold producers and refiners, but membership is expected to grow.

The Russian Central Bank has licensed about 100 banks to deal in precious metals and the first operations are starting, ending a decades-old state monopoly on the gold trade.

The state needs help from the private investment to pay producers for gold. Last year, the state was unable to buy about 60 tonnes and provide necessary resources to producers.

Finance Ministry official Anatoly Golovaty said this

gold would be circulating between commercial banks if Russia had "a civilised gold market."

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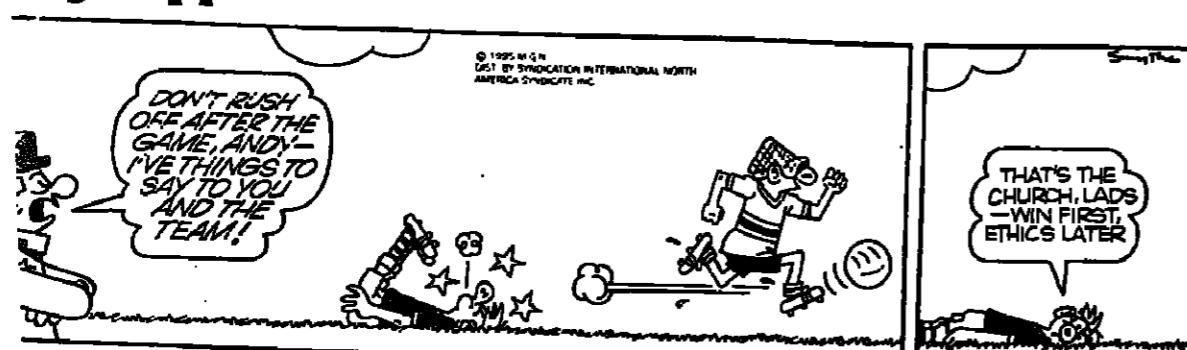
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Peanuts



Andy Capp



Itt'n'Jeff



**Business
Daily
Beat**

A review
of economic news
from the Arabic press

Road 'tolls' on the way

** ACCORDING TO a senior official at the Ministry of Public Works and Housing, the Kingdom's roads need maintenance at a cost of JD 60 million whereas the budget allocates only JD 5 million for this project. He said the ministry is conducting a statistical field study on the transportation sector in order to improve the roads network. Based on the study, the ministry will prepare a detailed report recommending the collection of tolls on highways used by transit vehicles and will request the government that the proceeds be given to the ministry to carry out the necessary road maintenance. The official said that the tariff will be specified for various roads once the green light is given by the government. He added that preliminary views point to implementing the toll scheme on: Zara-Ghor Hadith road, Aqaba-Ma'an road, Prince Abdullah Bridge-Amman road and the highway between the Syrian and Iraqi borders. The statistics and the study will be completed by mid-April '95 (Al-Dustour).

** THE MINISTER of interior banned trucks from using the Zara-Ghor Hadith road describing it as a vital touristic highway which was not basically designed for heavy vehicles (Al-Rai).

** MICHEL NAZZAL, president of the Jordanian Hotels Society, said there were about 5,000 hotel rooms with 10,000 beds throughout the Kingdom while in Eilat alone, there were more than 6,000 rooms. He added that the Israelis were planning to raise the number of hotel rooms in Eilat to 10,000 whereas the number of rooms in Aqaba did not exceed the 1,000 mark. (Al-Dustour).

** THE MAJORITY of water wells in Amman are not licensed to sell drinking water. Only 100 applications have been received for licensing although there are thirty private water wells in the Amman Governorate. There is a total of 61 private water wells all over Jordan.

According to the law, it is forbidden for anyone to sell or transport water without a prior written approval. Owners of water wells are required to pay an annual JD 500 (fee to the Water Authority) (Al-Rai).

** Ready-Mix Concrete and Construction Supplies Company is offering 750,000 shares at a JD 1 par value, for a public subscription starting March 20 until April 10, 1995. The firm, registered at the Ministry of Industry and Trade on Feb. 4, 1995 as a public shareholding company with a JD 3 million capital, aims at setting up and managing factories to make and trade in ready-mix concrete, curb stones and bricks. The company also aims at setting up housing projects for limited-income people. Main founders of the company are: Jawdat, Makram and Raja Al Alami (JD 100,000 each), Jordan National Bank, the Arab Bank and the National Portfolio Securities (JD 100,000 each), UDEEL Enterprises Ltd (a British firm — JD 100,000), Edward Babw (JD 100,000), the Bank of Jordan and Business Bank (JD 50,000 each), Fares Muasher (JD 50,000), Tewfik Fakhouri (JD 50,000) and Nasri Khouri (JD 50,000). The total number of founders was 127 accounting for a JD 2,250,000 equity. Only 25 per cent of the value of the share should be paid upon subscribing with the rest to be paid over the coming four years. The capital will go mainly to finance the cost of mixers, pumps and other equipment estimated at JD 1.34 million and to operational expenses (JD 1.02 million) (Al-Rai).

** The Jordan Electric Power Company requests all subscribers to pay their electricity bills within one week from today. The company will disconnect the power lines of all defaulters (Al-Rai).

Gulf gold consumption falls through weak demand from Saudis

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AFP) — Lower demand in Saudi Arabia depressed gold consumption in the Gulf by nearly 10 per cent in 1994 but it is expected to pick up in 1995, the World Gold Council (WGC) has said.

Overall consumption of the yellow metal in the six-nation Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) stood at around 207.2 tonnes in 1994 compared with 232.7 tonnes in 1993, said Pedro Bertran, WGC Middle East and India manager.

"The demand for 1994 in the Gulf area was lower than the 1993 demand level due to the softening of demand in Saudi Arabia," he said in a statement.

However, the significant increase in demand in Saudi Arabia in the last quarter as compared with demand in the first, second and third quarters of 1994 provides room for optimism for stimulation in demand in 1995," he added.

WGC figures showed Gulf gold consumption accounted for nearly 8.5 per cent of the total world demand of 2,442 tonnes in 1994.

Financial Markets in co-operation with Cairo Amman Bank

Foreign Exchange Market Summary (March 6 - March 10, 1995)

AMMAN — The dollar witnessed major fluctuations against other major currencies last week, especially against the mark. It ended the week 3.56 per cent lower against the yen, 0.78 per cent lower against the mark and 3.41 per cent higher against sterling.

The U.S. unit declined sharply against other major currencies Monday 6/3/1995, as the dollar continued its decline that began at the end of the previous week. The dollar's decline came on the back of the sharp rise of the mark against the European currencies; in addition to dealers' worries that the U.S. president plan to extend loans to Mexico at the end of last January might limit the U.S. treasury's capability to support the dollar.

The dollar continued its depreciation against other major currencies Tuesday, setting new post World War II records against the mark and the yen. Despite the sharp decline in the dollar, the Federal Reserve (Fed) and foreign central banks refrained from intervening in the market, which contributed to the dollar's decline. Meanwhile, analysts indicated that growing expectations that an increase in German interest rates sooner than expected was a major obstacle against the dollar.

The dollar appreciated against other major currencies Wednesday, however, after officials in the European and American monetary authorities, expressed their concern over the deterioration of the dollar. A Bundesbank member indicated that a cut in the German interest rates were possible if the dollar continues to decline. Comments by Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan, before the Congress also contributed to the dollar rise. Mr. Greenspan told the Congress that it was important to keep the U.S. currency stable, and that the Fed would not hesitate tightening its monetary policy if necessary.

The dollar continued its appreciation against the mark and the yen Thursday, following increased speculation that the Mexican government would have to undertake certain measures to stabilise the economy.

On Friday, the dollar continued its rise against the mark and sterling, while stabilising against the yen. Reports indicated that trading sought direction, rumours, and uncertainty were spread over the market. Analysts also indicated that February unemployment report and comments by Federal Reserve chairman and treasury secretary had little effect in the dollar exchange rates. The U.S. non-farm payrolls rose by 318 thousand in February, compared to a rise of 134 thousand in January, prompting the unemployment rate to decline from 5.7 per cent to 5.4 per cent. Meanwhile, Treasury Secretary Robert Rubin, indicated before the Congress that Mexico was implementing an appropriate stringent monetary policy, while Mr. Greenspan, doubted that the Mexican financial crisis was a major factor in the dollar's decline.

The U.S. unit, thus ended the week at 1.4125 marks, 90.90 yen and at 1.5740 to sterling.

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Iraqi oil reserve figures baffle Western oilmen

BAGHDAD (R) — Western oilmen, taking part in an oil conference here, are treating Iraq's recent forecasts for future crude production and reserves with caution.

"Any one would salivate over such figures. But figures are something and real business is something else," said a Western participant who declined to be named.

"There are also a number of things which, arithmetically, cannot be correct," the expert added. He did not elaborate.

Oil Minister Safa Hadi Jawad told more than 250 energy specialists Saturday that Iraq had giant undeveloped oilfields that could produce more than 4.5 million barrels per day (b/d).

Baghdad diplomats said in

rebuilding its oil industry, Iraq would first aim to upturn its role in the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) to regain the 3.14 million b/d quota it had before it invaded Kuwait in 1990.

But Mr. Jawad also said Iraq needed \$25 billion to revitalise its upstream oil industry over the next five to eight years.

He said Iraq possessed at least 112 billion barrels of proven reserves and 214 billion of probable reserves.

"If statements by OPEC members on reserves and production figures are all valid, the price will go to nothing," the Western specialist said.

Tashtan Revi of the British trading and shipping firm Ganoil said British oil companies in the conference were taking Mr. Jawad's figures seriously.

"They cannot just sit and wait," he said, noting the strong presence of British oil firms in Iraq in the past.

Tom Earls of the Irish firm Aran Energy said many of the Western specialists would refrain from taking any decisions before going back to their base countries. "We need to go back and check," he said.

He said as long as Iraq remained outside international markets everything said or done here would be "speculation."

"The market is volatile and it is good for speculators. When the embargo is lifted we will all know the truth," he added.

There are no representatives from U.S. firms in the conference, but half a dozen U.S. journalists and a consultant, Tom Stauffer, attend the meetings.

"U.S. companies would have liked to come but Clintonites have prevented

them. We are potentially losing out to our competitors," Mr. Stauffer said.

Mr. Stauffer said he worked for several U.S. oil firms which he refused to name.

"It is too late for the U.S. This is something that we should worry about," he said.

Asked to comment on the figures given by Mr. Jawad, Mr. Stauffer said: "It is not impossible. Potential reserves here are so large. There are some splendid oilfields here to be developed."

He said the Americans thought Iraq was "unreasonable in negotiations. But Venezuela has a bad record and U.S. firms do business there. Opportunities here are better."

Gennadi Temnov, vice-president of the Russian Kond-Petroleum, said Iraq had asked his company to develop three oilfields and feasibility studies were under way.

Shanghai reportedly provides best foreign investment opportunity in China

SHANGHAI (AFP) — China's eastern metropolis Shanghai is the country's best developed city for foreign investment, according to the results of a China Industry and Commerce Association survey.

Shanghai, where total contracted foreign investment reached a record \$10 billion in 1994, led the booming southern city of Guangzhou and the Shenzhen special economic zone, the Shanghai Securities News said.

Last year, 3,802 foreign-funded projects were approved, up 4.2 per cent from 1993.

Other leading cities, in order, included Dalian, Beijing, Zhuhai, Qingdao, Xiamen and Ningbo, said the survey, conducted with the Beijing Retail Market Survey CO.

Most of these cities are situated along China's eastern coast, while the pace of development outstrips inland provinces.

Shanghai Vice Mayor Zhao Qizheng, who is also the director of the city's Pudong New Area Administration Committee, was quoted as saying the municipality owed its success to other Chinese cities that had invested in its development.

"Pudong's development is the result of support from the

AMMAN FINANCIAL MARKET HOUSING CENTER AMMAN JORDAN					
ORGANIZED MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR SUNDAY 12/03/1995					
COMPANY'S NAME	NO. OF SHARES TRADED	VALUE TRADED JOD	PREV. CLOSING PRICE	CLOSING PRICE	CHANGE
ARAB BANK P/C	60	1295	188.500	188.250	-0.05%
JORDAN NATIONAL BANK	4450	19625	4.410	4.410	0
JORDAN NATIONAL BANK / NEW	450	1904	4.230	4.230	0
MIDDLE EAST INVESTMENT BANK	5600	8424	1.500	1.500	0
THE HOUSING BANK	1200	1065	9.500	9.500	0
JORDAN GULF BANK	18239	84701	1.250	1.250	0
JORDAN ISLAMIC BANK	2000	2600	3.750	3.820	0.07%
BUSINESS BANK	2500	8525	3.500	3.410	-0.09%
BRITISH SAVING & INVESTMENT FOR HOUSING	450	1402	3.070	3.070	0
JORDAN BANK FOR INVESTMENT	3203	37121	1.150	1.130	-0.02%
PHILADELPHIA INVESTMENT BANK	84157	11212	1.360	1.330	-0.03%
BANKS SECTOR					
JORDANIAN ELECTRIC POWER / NEW	2566	4024	1.570	1.580	0.01%
ARAB INTERNATIONAL HOTELS	271	405	1.500	1.500	0
JORDAN NATIONAL SHIPPING LINES	4000	20000	5.000	5.000	0
ARABIC PETROLEUM SECURITIES	3500	11575	3.330	3.300	-0.03%
ARABIC PETROLEUM SECURITIES	500	100	2.100	2.100	0
REED SEPPES INVESTMENT	200	230	1.120	1.150	0.03%
JORDAN INTERNATIONAL TRADING CENTER	250	230	0.970	0.920	-0.05%
ARAB INTER. FOR INVESTMENT & EDUCATION	2450	8477	3.450	3.460	0.01%
SERVICES SECTOR					
JORDAN TOBACCO & CIGARETTES	136	4216	32.000	31.000	-0.03%
ATTARCOOP CONST. MATERIAL MANUFACTURING	350	1700	1.170	1.150	-0.02%
THE JORDAN CEMENT FACTORIES	7130	21164	2.980	2.980	0
JORDAN PETROLEUM COMPANY	500	402	5.900	5.900	0
THE JORDAN POWER MILLS	2200	15390	7.550	7.450	-0.01%
ARAB PHARMACEUTICAL MANUFACTURING	19349	81932	4.160	4.200	0.04%
JORDAN DAIRY	500	1025	2.050	2.050	0
THE JORDAN PIPE MANUFACTURING	3150				

World Figure Skating Championships

Bobek's tears lead to bronze

BIRMINGHAM (AP) — U.S. champion Nicole Bobek fell down twice, hung her head at the end of her routine and left the ice in tears. Still, she was good enough to win the bronze medal Saturday at the World Figure Skating Championships.

Bobek, the 17-year-old prodigy child-turned-ice princess, had an improbable gold within her grasp after winning Friday's short programme. Instead, she was overtaken by a smooth and stylish performance from Chen Lu, who became the first Chinese skater ever to win a world title.

"It wasn't my best performance," said Bobek, who crashed to the ice after a triple loop and a triple salchow. "I was upset that I did miss those two jumps. They were very easy jumps for me."

Having blown a chance for the gold, Bobek then had to sweat it out through the last four skaters. Then came the joy of realising she'd hung for a place on the podium.

"This has helped a lot," she said. "I've proved to a lot of people that all this stuff written about me didn't affect me, and I think that's what they wanted it to do."

Moments after Bobek skated, her American teammate Michelle Kwan was also crying at the end of her programme. But these were tears of joy for a spotless performance that lifted Kwan to fourth and signalled that the 14-year-old skater would, like Bobek, be a title contender for years to come.

"There was nothing I could have done better," said Kwan, who was fifth after the short. "It was overwhelming with everybody standing and clapping and waving. They was unbelievable."

In the quirky world of figure skating scoring, it was ironic that Kwan's performance actually took the silver

away from Bobek. Kwan finished one place ahead of Bobek in the free skate, knocking her teammate down the one vital position that was just enough to improve France's Surya Bonaly to second overall.

"I think her for helping me," said Bonaly, smiling.

Bonaly, the five-time European champion and pre-competition favourite, blew her chance for the gold with a flawed performance in the short that left her fourth. But on Saturday, the 21-year-old French skater roared back with her usual lightning-bolt of energy and brute athleticism, hitting seven triple jumps in a routine to gypsy music.

The performance of the day, however, belonged to Chen. Wearing a red dress, the 18-year-old Chinese skater hit four triples in her programme to "The Last Emperor" soundtrack. But her smooth lines and elegant tracing were even more impressive, reflected in nothing but 5.8s and 5.9s for artistic impression.

Bobek's performance all week showed nerves of steel behind a school-girl smile. Having failed to qualify as a relative unknown last year, she came back this time to win her qualifying group on Monday as well as Friday's short.

A self-described free spirit with a distaste for training and a reputation for going astray on foreign skating trips, Bobek went through eight coaches in eight years before signing on with Richard Callaghan last summer.

Callaghan introduced a strict practice regimen, which paid off with a shock victory over Kwan at last month's U.S. nationals.

Then word leaked out that Bobek had entered a conditional plea of guilty in Janu-



Nicole Bobek of the U.S.

ary for home invasion of a fellow skater's house.

The case was dismissed because one of the conditions of Bobek's plea was that it not be made public. Her lawyer then alleged that a rival skater or former coach was behind the leak.

That led to media siege around Bobek's practice rink in Detroit. Bobek was shielded inside, her free-spirit attitude the perfect remedy to shake off the fuss.

"For a 17-year-old teenager, I think she's grown up fast and I think she's learned to focus and use some

strengths that she didn't know she had," Callaghan said. "Third in the world with two mistakes shows that, minus some mistakes, she's got a great future."

"She's changed completely from when I first started working with her in June," Callaghan said. "And I think she's a really different person on the ice and off the ice."

Bobek smiled as Callaghan praised her, the free spirit glowing from within.

"I'm still the same old Nicole," she said, flashing a mischievous grin. "Just grown up a bit."

The work began as a small child for Chen, who grew up

BIRMINGHAM (R) — When a foot injury forced Chen Lu out of last year's world figure skating championship in Japan, the doctor advised her to take six months off and have an operation.

Without surgery, he said, she might have to stop skating for up to a year.

That was too much for Chen to take, so she sought a second opinion.

In Beijing, a Chinese doctor treated the stress fracture of her right instep, kept her off the ice for a month and said surgery would not be necessary.

By the end of last April, Chen had joined the busy world tour of Olympic and world champions. She did not have the operation, nor did she stop skating. And now she is world champion, the first for China in the sport.

Chen captured the title in a tight battle with Surya Bonaly of France on Saturday, winning on a countback after neither had a majority of first place votes from the nine judges.

Her victory was a long time coming after first taking bronze at the 1992 World Championships in Oakland, California. A year later she was third again as Oksana Baiul won the gold medal.

And at last year's Lillehammer Olympics, Chen had to settle for third once more. Then the injury prevented her from capitalising on the absence in Japan of the two who had beaten her in Norway, Baiul and Nancy Kerrigan.

She said she felt "quiet lucky" after Saturday's triumph.

"I worked hard and this is my result from that hard work. It is not only the first time for me but for China and that has great significance to me," said Chen.

The work began as a small child for Chen, who grew up



Chinese Chen Lu displays her gold medal (AFP photo)

in the hard winters of Changchun City in the remote Jilin Province.

There are just three ice rinks in the province and only one near her home, though the city has a population of a million.

Chen spends most of each year training in Beijing and much of each day on the ice, with an extra hour devoted to physical conditioning and studying dance.

By nature she is quiet, calm and shy.

Though 18, she is, in coach Li's words, "still a child. She has not thought at all about what she wants to do when she stops skating."

Graf, Martinez reach final

DELRAY BEACH (Agencies) — Three-time defending champion Steffi Graf worked her way into the final of the \$430,000 Delray Beach women's tournament, while second seed Conchita Martinez advanced Saturday without a worry.

The top-seeded Graf took 69 minutes to defeat fellow German and third-seeded Anke Huber 6-4, 6-4.

Martinez spent a brief six minutes on court when her opponent, fourth-seeded Brenda Schultz of the Netherlands, retired from the match with a left thigh muscle injury she suffered in Friday's quarter-finals.

The Spaniard was serving in the second game of the first set, leading 1-0, when the 15th-ranked Schultz quit the match.

Prior to the match, there was speculation about who would be left standing in the Martinez-Schultz match since the Spaniard had also sustained an injury to her left hip, in her Friday quarter-final.

Schultz became the latest in a string of casualties at this event. Ten other players who were supposed to compete here called in sick with a variety of medical problems.

Graf, who benefited from the sick-out when Barbara Rittner of Germany defaulted in their quarter-final, maintained her untarnished record against Huber by posting her eighth successive victory against her.

"I'm a little stiff when I play her because I hurt the match a little too much," Huber said. "Maybe I have too much respect for her."

Graf, however, no longer feels her status borders Huber.

"In the beginning, the first couple of matches we played, I could feel that," Graf said. "I don't think that any longer. We both play pretty similar, but I'm a little bit more patient."

Both players had difficulty working through the windy conditions, but Graf showed greater mental strength. In the first set, Graf broke serve at 0-40 in the fifth game when Huber made three errors in a row and Graf beat a winning backhand return.

Scottie Pippen scored a season-high 40 points for the Bulls, who had a three-game winning streak snapped. Chicago had won its last seven home games.

In Houston, Clyde Drexler

scored 36 points and Hakeem Olajuwon added 34 points and 12 rebounds as the Rockets snapped a five-game losing streak with a 109-102 victory over the Dallas Mavericks.

The Rockets were in danger of becoming the first defending NBA champion to lose six consecutive games the following season. Dallas' 102-101 win over Houston on February 28 started the Rockets' five-game skid.

"This is the kind of effort it's going to take every night," said Olajuwon. "Clyde (Drexler) is a good player and you know that he's going to get his points. We are the kinds of players that can give you that almost every night. When you have a player like Clyde it makes things a lot easier on me."

I stretched for that forehand and almost fell to the ground," Schultz said.

Martinez, whose only victory in 10 tries against Graf came in their last encounter at the 1993 Slams of Philadelphia, said her injury seems to have improved.

"It's actually recovered really good," Martinez said of her hip. "It's much better, but it would have been worse if I was playing. This gives me another day of rest and will help me tomorrow."

Connors, Borg advance

In Naples, Florida — Jimmy Connors, Bjorn Borg and Jose-Luis Clerc earned final berths in the Bueuen Masters 33-and-over tennis championships Friday.

Borg used consistent ground strokes and his patented passing shots to defeat John Lloyd 6-4, 6-4.

Earlier, Connors defeated Roscoe Tanner 6-3, 6-1, and Clerc knocked off Guillermo Vilas 6-2, 7-6 (7-1). The wins set up the \$300,000 season-ending battle Friday of the top eight performers on the Champions Tour.

Connors broke Tanner in the seventh game of the first set to take the lead. He won eight of the next nine games, finishing off Tanner in a match lasting 68 minutes.

In the second match, Clerc had little trouble with Vilas in the first set but couldn't manage a break in the second set. Clerc dominated in the tie-break.

After the match, Vilas was diagnosed with a strained back and was forced to withdraw from the doubles portion of the tournament.

Pele causes commotion at Pan Am Olympic village

MAR DEL PLATA, Argentina (AP) — Brazilians have a saying that even an old king never loses his majesty. Just ask Pele.

The retired "king" of soccer got a royal reception when he paid a surprise visit Saturday to the compound of the Brazilian delegation at the Pan American Games.

Athletes, diplomats, chambermaids, security guards and journalists dropped everything and rushed to have their photo taken with the world's greatest soccer star. Pele graciously attended them all.

"I keep thinking that it won't happen, that it's all in the past. But I still get a thrill with the attention," he said.

Pele, 54, retired as a player in 1977, but now he is more active than ever in a new role, as Brazil's cabinet-level minister of sports.

"I lost status," he joked. "I stopped being a king and dropped to minister."

Pele arrived Friday in this seaside resort city, hoping to see the Brazilian soccer team's opening game against Costa Rica. But he got in late and had to watch Brazil's 2-0 victory on television.

He praised the play of the young squad, a second-string team of players under 20. The 'A' team will play in the World Junior Championships in Nigeria.

"Brazil has lots of quality players, enough to form three or four national teams," he said.

Pele plans to step up sports exchanges and cooperation with neighbour — and traditional rival — Argentina, especially in preparation for the 1996 Olympics in Atlanta.

The idea is shared by Argentine president Carlos Menem, a sports enthusiast who put up Pele at his beach house on the outskirts of this city.

And Pele has lots more ideas that promise to shake up Brazilian sports. They range from finding private sponsors for amateur sports to breaking up what he called "dictatorships" in some sports federations, notably judo and basketball.

"I didn't join this team to lose," he said. "I plan to fulfill 100 per cent of what I set out to do."

To help him in that task, Pele said he has enlisted the help of top sports figures, including three-time formula one racing champion Nelson Piquet and former soccer star Socrates.

What his ministry doesn't have, he said, is money.

"The first thing I learned as minister was:

"There's no budget yet," he said with a laugh.

Still, Pele expects to accomplish a lot simply with the contacts and prestige he built over the years. And he is plowing ahead with the irresistible impetus he once showed charging the enemy goal.

"Life is beginning now," he said.

Hornets sting Heat with 3-point barrage

CHARLOTTE (R) — The Hornets stung the Heat with a rash of three pointers on Saturday to extend their Central Division lead and inch closer to claiming the second best record in the Eastern Conference.

Hersey Hawkins and Dell Curry each made three-pointers in a game-breaking fourth quarter run as Charlotte made a team-record dozen long range hoops in beating Miami 104-95.

The win improved Charlotte to 39-22, increased their lead over Indiana to 1 1/2 games in the Central and moved them within half a game of the Knicks in the struggle for second seeding in the playoffs behind the Orlando Magic.

Hawkins and Curry each connected from long range during a 10-4 spurt at the start of the fourth quarter that broke a 74-74 tie. Miami came no closer than three points thereafter.

"We have a lot of good shooters on this team. Anyone can get hot," Charlotte guard Muggsy Bogues said.

"LJ (Larry Johnson), Dell (Curry) and Hawk (Hersey Hawkins)" were stroking it tonight.

Curry finished 5-of-7 from three-point range, while Johnson connected on 3-of-4. Hawkins made 3-of-6 from long distance and Burrell made his only attempt. Larry Johnson scored 25 points and Alonzo Mourning and Curry had 21 points.

Glen Rice scored 28 points



for Miami.

In New York, Shawn Kemp scored 22 points and grabbed 19 rebounds as the Seattle SuperSonics cruised to a 96-84 victory over the New York Knicks, who lost center Patrick Ewing with a leg injury.

and Sam Bowie each scored four points in a 15-3 run as the Los Angeles Lakers erased a 14-point, fourth-

RESULTS

Charlotte	104	Miami	95
Washington	110	New Jersey	102
LA Lakers	108	Chicago	105
Houston	109	Dallas	102
Seattle	96	New York	94

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Major arrives in Israel promising more British help

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — British Prime Minister John Major arrived in Israel on Sunday, pledging to bolster bilateral ties and reinforce Mideast peace talks by strengthening economic bonds with the Jewish state.

Accompanying Mr. Major were 30 top British business men, among them representatives of companies that used to abide by an Arab boycott of Israel.

"Each and every one of them share my belief that even stronger economic and financial ties between Britain and Israel will strengthen the bonds that already unite us," Mr. Major told Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and cabinet ministers at a welcoming ceremony.

"I also believe that they can make a contribution to peace," Mr. Major added.

In interviews before his departure, Mr. Major suggested he would offer more financial aid to the ailing Palestinian self-rule government in Gaza when he meets Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) leader Yasser Arafat there on Tuesday.

Mr. Major told Israel radio that it was "very important to both sides in the peace process to know that countries around the world stand behind that process."

He said Britain was "prepared to play a part also in the economic and other aspects in ensuring the peace process can be carried forward," including behind-the-scenes contacts.

Israel's relations have been bumpy with Britain, which ruled the area before Israel was created in 1948. Mr. Major is only the second British premier to visit the Jewish state, after Margaret Thatcher, who came in May 1986.

Mr. Major made a point to define today's Israeli-British relations as "the warmest possible friendship."

In a conciliatory gesture, Mr. Major left home the Foreign Office official in charge of the Middle East, Douglas Hogg, who had plans to visit PLO headquarters in Jerusalem.

Israel opposes such a visit, and one of Mr. Hogg's deputies, Andrew Green, will

instead pay a "courtesy call" on FLO officials there on Tuesday.

Mr. Rabin said relations were "close and very friendly" and noted London's concern for the peace and security of Israel and the Middle East.

He also congratulated Mr. Major on the framework for peace in Northern Ireland before the two men went into talks at the Israeli premier's office.

Mr. Major said he wants to help improve conditions for the Palestinians and will officially hand over a fleet of 50 police patrol vehicles.

Britain is a major donor to the autonomy authority, providing \$120 million a year over and above its 16 per cent share of the \$600 million pledged by the European Union.

"I also believe that they can make a contribution to peace," Mr. Major added.

Mr. Major will go on to Amman on Tuesday and reconfirm "longstanding friendly relations" with Jordan in talks Wednesday with King Hussein and Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker, a British official said.

Palestinian officials were buoyed by Mr. Major's promises of aid.

"We hope Major's visit will take this peace process one step forward," Palestinian Planning Minister Nabil Shaath said, referring to both the political and business aspects of the visit.

Only about \$200 million of a pledged \$2.4 billion over five years from donor countries have arrived in Gaza since last year. An Israeli official estimated the PLO deficit at \$300 million.

Israel radio estimated that Mr. Arafat's government was losing about \$1 million a day under a closure barring most Gazan workers — along with West Bank Palestinians — from entering Israel since a Jan. 22 suicide bombing that killed 21 Israelis.

According to the Mariv daily, Mr. Major last visited Palestinian turf as a member of parliament in 1982, when a stone whizzed by only inches from his head during a tour of the West Bank town of Bethlehem.

"The issue needs closer study," the minister told the *Jordan Times*, implying that there might have been an oversight in the decision.

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